LECTURES
ON THE
FIRST AND
SECOND
EPISTLES
OF PETER

LILLIE

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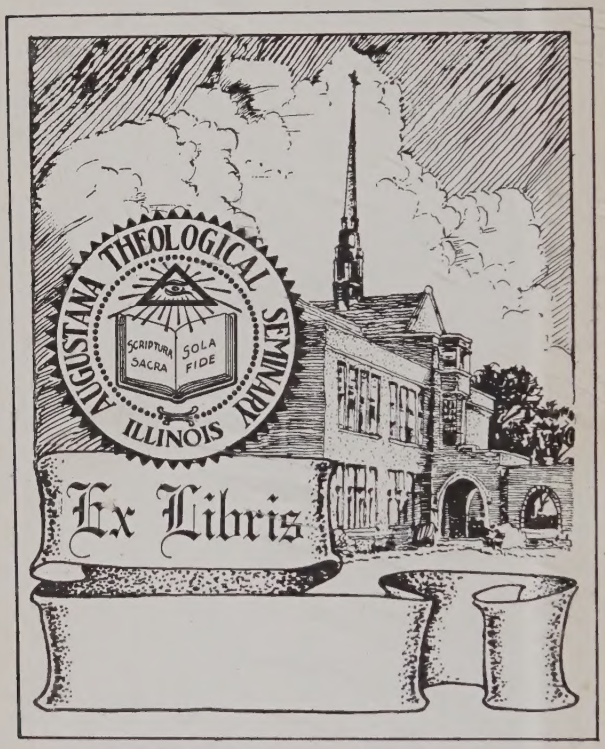
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LECTURES

ON THE

FIRST AND SECOND EPISTLES

OF

PETER

BY

THE REV. JOHN LILLIE, D.D.,

Late Pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Kingston, N. Y., author of "Lectures on the Epistles of Paul to the Thessalonians," etc.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

PHILIP SCHAFF, D.D.

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PREFACE.

In bringing before the public a posthumous work of the Rev. John Lillie, D.D., his friends are actuated not only by a desire to erect a fitting monument to his name, but also by the conviction that thereby they will do a good service to the cause of sacred learning and to the Christian pulpit.

Dr. Lillie, a Scotchman by birth and an American by adoption, was one of the best classical and biblical scholars of this country. Born December 16th, 1812, at Kelso, he graduated at the University of Edinburgh in 1831 with the first honors of his class; and in public recognition of his subsequent labors in the cause of sacred learning, his Alma Mater conferred upon him, in 1855, the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity. In 1834, he emigrated, in company with elder members of his family, to the United States, and after completing his theological studies at New-Brunswick, N. J., he entered the ministry of the Gospel. He died, after a brief illness, February 23d, 1867, in the prime of life and vigor, as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church at Kingston, N. Y., universally esteemed and greatly beloved by the people of his charge.

Without neglecting his pastoral duties, he was always an enthusiastic and most systematic student, especially of the Bible. For several years he devoted himself exclusively to the critical study of the New Testament, with the help of the most extensive exegetical library of New-York City.

He prepared elaborate critical and philological commentaries on the Epistles to the Thessalonians, the Epistles of James, Peter, John, and Jude, most of which were published by the American Bible Union. His last work was the translation of Auberlen and Riggenbach's Commentary on the Thessalonians, with valuable additions, for the American edition of Lange's "Bible-work." It appeared in the sixth volume, in 1868, with a biographical notice by the general editor, who esteemed him as a dear personal friend and as one of his ablest co-workers in this extensive enterprise.

At his death Dr. Lillie left in manuscript his Lectures on the Epistles of Peter, which he had elaborated with special interest, and which he regarded as his best work. They are similar in character and scope to his Lectures on the Thessalonians, published by Messrs. R. Carter & Brothers, New-York, 1860. Though very different in plan and structure from the immortal work of Archbishop Leighton on the First Epistle of Peter, they breathe the same reverential spirit and devotional fervor, while they are much more full and thorough as an exposition, and have the great advantage of embodying the most valuable results of the latest critical research and exegetical learning.

Dr. Doddridge, in his preface to Archbishop Leighton's commentary, in giving some account of the labor which he bestowed on its preparation for the press, almost makes a merit of the inaccuracies of the copy, as showing "how well the distinguished author knew the value of time, and how superior he was to popular applause." The doctor adds that the delight and edification which he found in the work itself formed a full equivalent for the pains he bestowed on it. The pleasure and profit of superintending the printing of the present work have been equally satisfying to those who engaged in it as a willing service to the

Church of God and to the memory of a beloved friend. In this case, however, there is no need to frame apologies for inaccuracies of the original copy, which was so perfectly prepared for the press that the only care necessary has been to follow it accurately. The work is presented to the reader precisely as the author left it. No question of alteration or omission has ever been raised except regarding one or two paragraphs which reflect the popular excitement of the trying period during which the lectures were delivered, and which it was thought might seem out of place in a work whose object and influence lie far beyond the range of local and ephemeral interests. But upon the whole it was thought unwarrantable to use any liberty with a manuscript which bore evident marks of the author's severe and deliberate scrutiny.

In like manner, Dr. Doddridge, while paying a just tribute to the eloquence of Leighton, and rightly claiming that, "though the practical preacher chiefly shines in his work, the judicious expositor also appears," makes a merit of its deficiency in what he styles "the laborious sifting of words and syllables," as though that were beneath the dignity of the object which his author pursued. How far this estimate of the value of a minute examination of the text may have been influenced by Doddridge's views of inspiration, we cannot say. But with Dr. Lillie's conviction that the words and syllables to be sifted are those which the Holy Ghost taught, no labor bestowed in ascertaining their precise weight and import could be regarded as excessive. His business as an expositor was not to suggest what meanings could be forced upon the text, or what truths could be clustered around it, but to determine with accuracy what the inspired words are designed to convey, under the assurance that there is not so much as a syllable redundant or insignificant. This is a chief excellence of these lectures. They abundantly illus-

trate the Divine wisdom in the choice of human words to reveal spiritual things—a wisdom which becomes more evident on the most thorough scrutiny, just as that wisdom is displayed in the infinitesimal exactness of its provisions and adaptations in the physical creation.

These lectures show how the results of the most profound study and of scholarly research may contribute to the edification of the Church, in the hands of one who is taught of God. They also show, indirectly, how little mere study and learning could supply the lack of spiritual discernment. Though we may not speak as Doddridge does of a style which recalls "that soft and sweet eloquence of Ulysses which Homer describes as falling like flakes of snow," the present work will be found valuable as an example of rich and forcible English. Passages of great beauty are scattered without effort throughout the volume, and it will be seen that a careful exegesis does not extinguish the fire or impede the flow of the most effective eloquence.

In truth, one of the benefits anticipated from the publication of these lectures is, that they will recommend, while they exemplify, the systematic exposition of Scripture as at once the most edifying and most permanently attractive form of pulpit ministration. Dr. Lillie may in some measure owe his success in this mode of instruction to his familiarity with it in the Scottish pulpit and to his theological training under Dr. John Brown, who greatly excelled in it, and to whose lectures on Peter affectionate reference is made in a note on page 237 of the volume. We believe it is not the partiality of friendship which ventures the judgment that, in many important particulars, the pupil has outstripped the master.

But without instituting any comparison of their respective works, we would offer either of them in evidence that the practice of expository lecturing may be precisely what is needed in our day, to give greater power and efficiency to

the pulpit. We urge not so much the consideration that the general adoption of this practice would gather interested hearers around the pulpit, as the consideration that it would minister truly to the spiritual wants of the people of God; and we can scarcely doubt would be followed by a signal revival of the languishing graces and energies of the Church. This is not the place to expatiate on its advantages, yet we cannot dismiss the subject without suggesting that the regular exposition of some book in the Bible, such as we find in these Lectures, would insure due attention to important doctrines which otherwise are apt to be overlooked, and the consideration of relative duties which could not otherwise be introduced into the pulpit without the suspicion of some personal or party aim. In support of this suggestion we simply refer to the present volume.

The Epistles of Peter abound with well-known "difficult passages." These our author has never sought to evade, and whether his explanations of them be in all cases accepted or not, the reader will admire the frankness with which he meets them, the impartiality with which he states the views of others, and the modest decision with which he gives his own conclusion.

Beyond all other merits, these Lectures will be valued for their clear and uncompromising yet always devout testimony to the doctrines of grace. They are exhibited, not as blighting speculations, but as warm, living, practical realities. Here, in a day of many and wide deflections from "the old paths," is the voice of a trumpet giving no uncertain sound, to summon the scattered hosts back to "the good way." May He who makes Himself known as "the Restorer of paths," own it to the glory of His name!

Whatever may be the reception or influence of this book among men, it is "*unto God* a sweet savor of Christ." In parting once more with "a man greatly beloved," the sadness

of the thought that his last testimony on earth has now been borne, is relieved by the hope that the Church will not willingly let it die, but will bear it down, shedding abroad the fragrance of Immanuel's name, to the day of "our gathering together unto Him," when "every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labor."

PHILIP SCHAFF.

Bible House, New-York, October 12, 1868.

ADVERTISEMENT.

In this volume, as in that which preceded it on the Thessalonian Epistles, the author's aim has been to furnish a commentary on the Greek Text for the use of English readers, in which, along with the results of the best criticism, ancient and modern, should be retained something of the simplicity, directness, and warmth of ministerial address. The obvious difficulty of the attempt may be allowed to extenuate, in some measure, the defects of its execution.

Such matters of critical interest as were found less suitable for pulpit exposition are subjoined in the notes. These include a full statement of the various readings that are of any account, though in the delicate department of textual criticism the author has scarcely felt himself here called upon even to exercise a judgment. In the Translation, accordingly, appended to the Lectures, only those variations are taken into the text, on which critical editors, for a century past, may be said to be agreed.

It is proper to add, for the satisfaction of the careful student, that the works quoted or referred to, besides many others not named, have in every instance, with very few exceptions, been directly consulted. The following list embraces only those of which it seemed necessary to specify the particular editions used.

EDITIONS OF THE GREEK TEXT.

ALFORD, vol. iv., 2d ed., London, 1861.*

BENGEL, 3d ed., Tübingen, 1753; later decisions from the *Gnomon*, Tübingen, 1855.

BEZA, Cambridge, 1642, (from the ed. of 1598.)

BLOOMFIELD, 3d ed., London, 1839; also the *Supplemental Volume*, 2d ed., London, 1851.

ERASMUS, 3d ed., Basle, 1522.

GRIESBACH, Cambridge, Mass., 1809, (from the Leipzig ed. of 1805.)

HAHN, Leipzig, 1840.

KNAPP, from the edd. of Göschen, Leipzig, 1832, and Theile, Lepzig, 1853.

LACHMANN, vol. ii., Berlin, 1850.

MEYER, Göttingen, 1829.

MILL, ed. Küster, Leipzig, 1723.

SCHOLZ, from Bagster's Hexapla.

STEIGER, *Der erste Brief Petri*, Berlin, 1832.

THEILE, 4th ed., Leipzig, 1852.

TISCHENDORF, 7th large critical ed., in 2 vols., Lepzig, 1859. [8th large crit. edition now in course of preparation, 1868.]

WELLS, Help for the more clear and easy Understanding of the Holy Scriptures, Oxford, 1715.

The specimen of the evidence in favor of readings is taken from a comparison of Lachmann, De Wette, Huther, Wiesinger, and Alford; to which has been added a careful collation of the *Codex Sinaiticus* (*Sin.*) Where the readings of this interesting manuscript are given as *à prima manu*, (Sin^1.,) it will be understood that they were afterwards changed by correction, and for the most part conformed to what is called the *textus receptus*.

SYRIAC, Greenfield's ed., London, 1828.

VULGATE, from Stier and Theile's *Polyglotten Bibel*, 2d ed., Bielefeld, 1849.—The *Codex Amiatinus*, from Tischendorf's ed., Leipzig, 1854.

Original ed. of the Common ENGLISH VERSION,
WICLIF,
TYNDALE,
CRANMER,
GENEVAN,
RHEMISH,
} from Bagster's Hexapla.

BISHOPS' BIBLE, fol. ed. of 1584.

BRETSCHNEIDER, Lexicon Manuale in N. T., 2d ed., Leipzig, 1829.

BURTON, Greek Testament, 4th ed., Oxford, 1852.

DE WETTE, *Die Heilige Schrift*, 3d ed., Heidelberg, 1839; and the *Handbuch zum Neuen Test.* (2d ed. of *Peter*, with Brückner's Notes, Leipzig, 1853.)

* Of this volume, which came late into my hands, the notes alone have had the benefit; though in the Lectures there will be found numerous coincidences of exegesis and translation.

DIODATI, Italian Version and Annotations, Geneva, 1641.
DUTCH VERSION, from the Netherlands Bible Society's small ed. of the N. T., 1836; and the Annotations from the 4to Gorinchem ed., 1748.
GREENFIELD, *Hebrew N. T.*, London, 1831.
MARTINI, *Nuovo Test.*, vol. v., Florence, 1791.
PASSOW, *Handwörterbuch der Griech. Sprache*, ed. Palm and Rost, Leipzig, 1841, etc.
STEPHENS, *Thesaurus*, ed. Valpy, London, 1816–26.
WAHL, *Clavis N. T.*, 3d ed., Leipzig, 1843.
WETSTEIN, *Nov. Test. Græcum*, Amsterdam, 1752.
WINER, *Grammatik des neutest. Sprachidioms*, 6th ed., Leipzig, 1855. [7th ed. by Lünemann, 1867.]

Occasional reference is made to the author's *Revision of II. Peter, I., II., III. John, Jude, and Revelation*, published by the American Bible Union in 1854; and to *Lectures on the Epistles of Paul to the Thessalonians.* (Carters, New-York, 1860.)

LECTURES

ON THE

FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER.

Introductory Lecture.

Of the Apostle Peter's history and character we have in Scripture fuller and more interesting notices than of any other of the original Twelve. To bring these notices, or the more important of them, together into one view, will not be without its uses in our subsequent work of exposition.

A native of Bethsaida in Galilee, and by occupation a fisherman, Simon or Symeon,* as his name then was, seems to have been a disciple, and in attendance on the ministry, of John the Baptist, at the time of his introduction by his brother Andrew to the sin-bearing Lamb of God. In that very first interview, a significant intimation was given of his future eminence, both personal and official, when 'Jesus, *beholding* him'—fixing on him an earnest, searching, loving look—'said: Thou art Simon, the son of Jonas: thou shalt be called Cephas;' which in Greek is *Peter*, and in English a *Stone*, or *Rock*, though, doubtless, no one but the Lord Himself understood its full import as Simon's surname. Indeed, it was not till after the return of the latter to his home in Capernaum, that he became permanently attached to the person of Jesus. Awed by the revealed presence of the supernatural in the sudden great draught of fishes after a night of fruitless toil, 'he fell down,' in an overwhelming sense, and with a vehement confession, of his own unworthiness, 'at Jesus' knees,' whose voice then calmed his fears, and called him to be thenceforth a fisher of men.†

In this early incident we observe something of what on so

* Acts 15 : 14 ; 2 Peter 1 : 1.

† John 1 : 35 40–44 ; Matt. 4 : 18, 19 ; 8 : 5, 14 ; Luke 4 : 31, 38 ; 5 : 3–11.

many subsequent occasions distinguishes this Apostle—a readiness of spiritual insight; a warm, eager, impetuous temperament; an unrestrained yielding to the immediate impulse; a prompt and forcible utterance, by word and act, of every strong, however varying, conception and emotion. Thus, it was Peter, who, having asked and obtained the consent of his Master, hastened down from the boat amidst the stormy waves, and there 'seeing the wind boisterous'—diverting his troubled gaze even for a moment from the serene form of Jesus to the warring elements—forthwith cried out as one in danger of perishing.* He too it was who, in answer to the question, 'Whom say ye that I am?' made that second (he had made also the first) glorious confession of the common faith, which drew forth a blessing on himself, an opening and confirmation of all that was implied in his new name, and a promise to him, which was afterward extended to his brethren, of large authority in the administration of the Church. Nor yet was it long before an address of so great favor was followed by a rebuke no less signal, when the rash disciple, presuming on his relations to his Lord, and prompted, no doubt, by an affectionate zeal, as well as by impatience for the revelation of Messiah's throne, and of his own reward as a prince in the kingdom, sought to arrest the progress to the cross.† The same combination of presumptuous self-confidence with loving loyalty is apparent even in the unseasonable modesty, which would not that the lowly Saviour should wash his feet, succeeded, as the refusal presently was, by an equally unwarranted proposal to improve the rite, by extending it to his hands and his head.‡ But, of course, the saddest and darkest illustration of the natural defects and infirmity of his character was, when, after arrogantly boasting, with whatever sincere earnestness, on the way to Gethsemane, of his unalterable devotion, and readiness to die with Jesus, and after drawing the sword in His defense on a servant of the high-priest, he the very same night quailed before the eye of the high-priest's damsel, and, with a persistent and profane cow-

* Matt. 14 : 28–30.

† John 6 : 68, 69; Matt. 16 : 15–23; 19 : 27.

‡ John 13 : 6–9.

ardice denied that he knew Him. But even in that hour of guiltiest agitation it needed but one look of reproachful love from the Divine Prisoner, to break his heart into sudden and tearful repentance; and this, too, was just another of those swift and violent revulsions of feeling that characterized the man.*

If, however, on that occasion Peter was left to sink deeper in sin and shame than any of his brethren, it can as little be denied that in other and more honorable respects also he was the most distinguished of the number. This might be inferred from some things that have already been adverted to, and there are not a few additional circumstances that go to confirm the impression. 'Peter and they that were with him'—'Peter with the eleven'—'Peter and the rest'—soon come to be understood as perfectly natural paraphrases for the Twelve Apostles.† Though not the earliest of the disciples, his name uniformly stands at the head of the apostolic list,‡ however, in other respects, the order may vary; and the same position is assigned to him at every mention of the select three, who, admitted into the inner circle of their Lord's confidence, were alone suffered to attend Him into the chamber of death, when He called the ruler's daughter to life again, and alone beheld His glory on the mount, and His agony in the garden.§

For this place—not of official primacy; of that the New Testament contains not the slightest hint; but—of priority and representative precedence, Peter was indeed well fitted by his forward energy and strong self-reliance. And the whole history shows that the arrangement was habitually recognized by the Lord, and acquiesced in without a murmur by the rest of the Apostles. It seems even to have been generally understood in Capernaum, where the collectors of the temple-tax,

* Matt. 26 : 33, 35, 69–75; John 18 : 10; Luke 22 : 61.

† Luke 8 : 45, (comp. 9 : 32;) Acts 2 : 14, 37; comp. Acts 5 : 29.

‡ Matt. 10 : 2–4, (*πρῶτος Σίμων*;) Mark 3 : 16–19; Luke 6 : 14–16; Acts 1 : 13.

§ Luke 8 : 51; 9 : 28; Mark 14 : 33, (comp. 13 : 3.) The other James of Gal. 2 : 9 is there named first, on account, probably, of the relations which he sustained to the church at Jerusalem.

when in doubt as to whether Jesus paid it or not, apply for the information to Peter, and he, though apparently without authority, answers in the affirmative. It is also worthy of note that, on the same occasion, the Master first gently admonished the ever-ready disciple, and then instructed him to take the miraculous coin from the fish's mouth, 'and give,' said He, 'unto them for thee and me.' Still more significant is it that, in warning the Apostles of their great common peril from the malice of Satan, and Peter in particular of that fall which only the Saviour's almighty intercession could keep from proving fatal, the Lord added a special charge that he, when restored, should strengthen his brethren.* The rock might be swayed to and fro by these blasts from hell. But from its sure foundations no created power should dislodge it. It must still remain, a shelter and defense to many.

On the first day of the week, Peter and John, hearing from Mary Magdalene of the disappearance of the Lord's body, hurried off together to the sepulchre. But though John outran Peter, it was Peter who first ventured in where the angels, unseen by him, kept reverent watch. In the message already delivered by them to the women, for the Apostles to meet the Risen One in Galilee, Peter's name alone was specified, from a gracious consideration for the humbled disciple; and to him first, of all the Apostles, did Jesus show Himself the same day that He rose.† Afterward, at the Sea of Tiberias, no sooner does Peter understand that He who is seen standing on the shore in the early dawn, and at whose word that old miracle has now repeated itself, is indeed the Lord, than with his usual precipitancy, and regardless of the work in hand, which he himself had proposed, he casts himself into the sea, and so hastens to the presence of Him whom his soul loved. Of that love he then, in presence of his brethren, makes a threefold declaration, in answer to the Lord's threefold questioning, and is thereupon, with an equal reiteration, confirmed in his office as a shepherd of Christ's flock. In the same hour of mingled humiliation and joy, his death of martyrdom is sol-

* Matt. 17 : 24–27; Luke 22 : 31, 32.

† Mark 16 : 7; Luke 24 : 34; John 20 : 1–6; 1 Cor. 15 : 5.

emnly foreshown. But, dismayed no longer by the prospect of coming trial, he, at his Master's call, steps forth, and follows Him.*

Passing now to the book of the Acts, we there find Peter bearing the very part among the disciples, as their leader and spokesman, which the Gospels had prepared us to expect. The first half of that book is mainly a record of his sayings and doings. The curtain rises on the praying company assembled in the upper room, and Peter is seen standing in the midst, arguing the necessity of completing the number of the official witnesses of the resurrection. The fiery tongues of Pentecost sat on all; but the first formal utterance of the newly organized Church—that majestic address, by means of which three thousand souls of the congregated Israel were in one day gathered into her bosom—was spoken by Peter in the name of the Twelve. And so 'Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer;' but the first miracle also was there wrought by Peter's hand, and by him explained in a second effectual testimony to the glory of Jesus Christ. Arrested, and brought with his companion before the Sanhedrim, with what holy boldness does he repeat the joint witness, and, where so lately he had disowned his Master, now stand unshaken by all threatenings! †

Thus, whether in the internal affairs of the Church, or in her outward working, the superior activity of this Apostle, and what we may call his social prerogative, as the first among his peers, became at once conspicuous, and they continued so throughout. His lips pronounced the doom of Ananias and Sapphira. With such exuberance and splendor did the powers of the world to come manifest themselves in his ministry, that the sick were brought forth into the streets, and 'laid on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them.' Again arraigned with his brethren, after their common imprisonment by order of the high-priest, and liberation by the angel, it is still Peter who, as their acknowledged mouthpiece, proclaimed anew before the exasperated council the resurrection,

* John 21 : 1–20. † Acts 1 : 13–22; 2 : 3, 14–41; 3; 4 : 4; 4 : 1–20.

and exaltation as Prince and Saviour to the right hand of God, of the Man whom that council 'slew and hanged on a tree.'*

His next appearance—accompanied, as usual, by John—is in Samaria, the two associates having been sent down thither by the Apostles which were at Jerusalem, as soon as it was known that 'Samaria'—hated, despised Samaria—'had received the word of God.' There, after prayer, and 'through laying on of the Apostles' hands, the Holy Ghost was given' to the new converts; and there Peter confounded the impiety of Simon Magus. We then hear of him 'passing,' in the fervor of his missionary zeal, 'throughout all quarters,' and confirming the word that he preached by mighty signs and wonders, as in healing the paralytic of Lydda, and raising the dead at Joppa.†

It was during his sojourn at the latter place, in the house of Simon the tanner, that the Apostle of the circumcision was taught by a heavenly vision, though not without a demur on his part, that reminds us of the old Peter of the Gospels, not to call any man common or unclean. That lesson he proceeded forthwith, and without further gainsaying, to put in practice at Cæsarea, by receiving into the Church Cornelius and his friends through baptism alone—a bold and till then unheard-of freedom, which, however, he did not fail to vindicate, on his return to Jerusalem, against all opposers.‡

In the year 44, Herod Agrippa, seeking to please the Jews, cast Peter once more into prison, intending, it would appear, to bring him also by and by to a like bloody end with James the brother of John. But his hour was not yet come. The unceasing prayers made of the Church unto God for her great champion were answered in his second miraculous release through angelic interposition, and his unexpected return to the anxious disciples. The reunion, indeed, was of very short duration. He simply 'declared unto them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison;' and then, with a request that the same information should be conveyed to the absent brethren, 'he departed,' it is added, in a tone of reserve which conjecture has tried in vain to penetrate, 'and went into another

* Acts 5 : 1–32. † Acts 8 : 14–25; 9 : 32–43.
‡ Acts 10; 11 : 1–18.

place.' There is, in fact, no further mention of him in the apostolic history, except that, some six years later, we find him rising up in the Council of Jerusalem, and there reasserting Gentile freedom from the yoke of ordinances.*

Two or three other points of interest, however, can be gleaned from the Epistles. Thus, in the Epistle to the Galatians Paul expressly tells us that, when he first visited Jerusalem, after his conversion, his object was 'to see Peter,' and that he then 'abode with him fifteen days.' Afterward—at the time, as is generally understood, of the council—occurred that more famous interview, also referred to in the same Epistle, at which these representatives of Jewish and Gentile Christianity gave to each other the right hand of fellowship, and came to a general understanding with regard to their respective fields of labor. The one was to go unto the heathen, and the other unto the circumcision; though this agreement was by no means intended to forbid either from entering his neighbor's province, as circumstances and the interests of the common cause might require. Long before that, when 'God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His name,' He 'made choice among the Apostles, that the Gentiles, by Peter's mouth, should hear the word of the Gospel, and believe.' And here we have Peter's two Epistles addressed to churches composed mainly of Gentile converts. In like manner, whether the Epistle to the Hebrews was dictated by the Gentile Apostle or not, it is certain that, wherever Paul traveled, his Jewish feelings, and indeed the law, so to speak, of apostolic missions, led him invariably to make the first offer of Christ and His salvation to his 'brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh, who were Israelites.' Still, the special rule adopted on that occasion for the distribution of the work was to the effect above stated, and, it may be, was not without a perverted influence on the party spirit of the times, when one boasted, 'I am of Paul,' and another, 'I of Cephas.'†

It need scarcely be said, that these feelings of jealous rivalry were not shared by the noble men whose names were

* Acts 12 : 1–17; 15 : 7–11.

† Gal. 1 : 18; 2 : 7–9; Acts 15 : 7–14; Rom. 9 : 3, 4; 1 Cor. 1 : 12.

thus abused by their followers. When, indeed, they met afterward in Antioch, Peter, in yielding for a time to his fear of the Jewish zealots, and withdrawing, in consequence, from intimate association with the Gentile brethren, afforded one more painful illustration of his weakness, and subjected himself to Paul's public and resolute rebuke for his dissimulation.* But it was the smiting of the righteous by the righteous ; and I doubt not that, in the end, it cemented their friendship and strengthened their sense of oneness in Christ. Most interesting in this regard is Peter's affectionate mention, in the Second Epistle, (3 : 15, 16,) of his 'beloved brother Paul,' and of the divine wisdom displayed in all his writings. Peter's own familiar acquaintance with these writings seems to be implied also in the numerous, perhaps intentional, coincidences we shall meet with, both of thought and expression.

In the First Epistle to the Corinthians (9 : 5) there is an allusion to Cephas (so Paul generally calls him) as attended in his missionary journeyings by his wife. And this, with what we have already gathered from Galatians, is really all the information we have respecting Peter's history subsequent to the Council of Jerusalem in A.D. 50, that can be safely relied on, unless the correct interpretation of 1 Peter 5 : 13 allows us to add that, at one time, he traveled as far as Babylon, and there wrote his First Epistle.

Various other particulars, to be sure, are supplied by tradition ; as, that he preached the Gospel to the Jews of Asia Minor—was concerned in the founding of the great churches of Corinth and Rome—was, for some years, Bishop of Antioch, and, for many more, Bishop of Rome—that, in Rome, he again encountered Simon the sorcerer, and brought his blasphemous pretensions to a tragical termination—that, attempting to escape from the city, in the time of the Neronian persecution, he was met by the Saviour, bearing His cross in the opposite direction, and told, in answer to the inquiry, 'Lord, whither goest Thou?' that He came to be crucified afresh ; that thereupon, Peter instantly retraced his steps,

* Galatians 2 : 11–14.

and, declaring himself unworthy to suffer in the same form as his Lord, died by crucifixion with his head downward.

Nothing of all this, however, can be historically verified, and most of it is demonstrably erroneous. But certainly there is no other reason why we need hesitate to admit, what all Christian antiquity affirms, that our Apostle perished at Rome, under Nero. And, as the persecution broke out in the latter half of the year 64, and the First Epistle speaks not only of a depressed condition of the Church (1 : 6 ; 3 : 16) but of a 'fiery trial' (4 : 12, 17) then arising, while the Second Epistle solemnly anticipates the writer's approaching death, (1 : 13–15,) the same year may be accepted—for neither on this point can we speak with full assurance—as the date both of Peter's martyrdom and of the Epistles themselves. That he had not arrived in Rome much before that is, with great probability, inferred from the absence of any reference to him in those Epistles of Paul that were written during the latter's own imprisonment in the imperial city.

With regard to the genuineness of the canonical writings that bear the name of Peter, this, in the case of the First Epistle, has been always and universally conceded, except, of course, by those who of late years have made it their business to doubt about every thing. But as much can not be said for the Second. 'It was directed,' says one of the most learned living scholars of Germany,* 'more to the future, (2 Peter 1 : 14, 15,) like a testament to be opened long after the death of the testator. To whom it was intrusted, and whether the wishes of the writer were rightfully fulfilled, we do not know ; but we do know that the Epistle found no place in the primitive Canon,† which existed in the second and third centuries. . . . Subsequently, when the Apostolic authority had disappeared, and the new authority of universal councils had not yet arisen in its place, no additions to the canon were admitted, even although unquestionably authentic. This explains the resistance to the acknowledgment of this Epistle when it came forth from its obscurity. The first church that had it,

* Thiersch, Church in the Apostolic Age. London, 1852.

† Nor in the Peshito Syriac.

and the first teachers that expounded it, were those at Alexandria. But the Church at large was so justly persuaded, by its internal worth, both of its genuineness and of its inspiration, that, when the Canon was rendered complete, in the fourth century, this was universally and without difficulty received as one of the seven catholic Epistles. And the more gigantic the corruptions, and the nearer the judgment therein foretold daily become, the more cause has Christendom to hold fast this sacred document.'

You will remember, also, that the Second Epistle, equally with the First, expressly claims, on the face of it, to be the production of the Apostle Peter, (1 : 1 ; 3 : 1, 2 ;) and were the claim a false one, the author must have been an impostor of the worst kind. But such an alternative starts difficulties of a far more serious sort than any that can be alleged against the genuineness from the later admission of the Epistle into the Canon, or from a supposed diversity of style.

Both Epistles, indeed, the more they are studied, will the more clearly appear to be, in their stirring energy, and in the dignity, elevation, and pervading sanctity of their tone, every way worthy of the prince of the Apostles. In both, his object is, as he himself explains it, (2 Peter 3 : 1,) to 'stir up the pure minds' of the faithful, 'by way of remembrance,' to fulfill, to his life's last hour, the precious trust which his Lord had committed to him, of 'strengthening his brethren,' by comforting them amid their thick-coming sorrows, confirming them in the faith and holiness of that Gospel which they had received, for the most part, it would appear, from Paul and Paul's followers, but to which the Apostle of the circumcision also now sets his glowing seal, and that, by mingling exhortation with his testimony that 'this is the true grace of God wherein they stand, (1 Peter 5 : 12,) preparing them for the 'crown of glory' in 'the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.' (1 Peter 5 : 4 ; 2 Peter 1 : 11.)

Of the First Epistle, with which we are now immediately concerned, it may further be observed that, being mainly of a practical and hortatory character throughout, it is not marked by any great strictness of logical arrangement. Less dialectic

than many of Paul's writings, it differs also from the Epistle of James in its fuller recognition of the doctrines of grace, and especially in the richness of its allusions to the person, and character, and work of the Redeemer. But even these topics are introduced, not so much in the way of doctrinal exposition, as for the sake of their direct bearing on the regulation of the Christian life.

After the inscription and salutation, (1 : 1, 2,) the Epistle opens with devout thanksgiving to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ for the state of high privilege and expectation to which believers are raised through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, (1 : 3–12.) And then this great salvation, in present possession and in certain prospect, is at once made the foundation of an appeal for universal holiness of heart and life, (1 : 13–2 : 10.) These general exhortations are followed by particular counsels for the guidance of the faithful in their relations to the world at large and the civil authorities, (2 : 11–17,) as well as in the more intimate associations of the household and the Church, (2 : 18–5 : 9 ;) the whole being interspersed, however, with passages of a more general complexion, and especially with many words of tender and animating encouragement to such as suffer for righteousness' sake. The Epistle closes with a benediction, or, as 5 : 10 is frequently read, with an assurance of the divine favor, and a doxology ; a statement of the writer's design in the preparation of the letter ; two or three messages of greeting ; and a renewed benediction, (5 : 10–14.)

Minor points of connection and detail can better be noted in the course of the exposition.

Lecture II.

1 *Peter* 1 : 1, 2.

'Peter, an Apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.'

The writer announces himself by the name, which many precious recollections had already endeared to the churches as well as to himself, and by his official rank as '*an Apostle of Jesus Christ*'—one of those extraordinary messengers or ambassadors of the Anointed Saviour, who, having 'companied' with Him during the days of His flesh, were fitted and 'ordained to be witnesses of His resurrection'—whose commission, emanating directly from the Lord, and attested by 'signs and wonders, and divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost,' constituted them authoritative expounders in all the world, to Jew and Gentile alike, of Christ's doctrine and law, 'stewards of the mysteries of God,' 'wise master-builders' on the one divine foundation, the unerring guides and rightful rulers of the entire 'household of faith.'*

Claiming, therefore, in the inscription of the Epistle, to be '*an Apostle of Jesus Christ*,' he virtually claims for what is to follow the reverent regard and loving obedience of all who call Jesus Lord. Equally apparent, however, is the absence of all pretension to superiority to his brethren in the same office. We find here just as little of the lordly arrogance as there is of the mock humility of those who have since boasted of being his successors.

* Acts 1 : 21, 22; Heb. 2 : 4; 1 Cor. 3 : 10; 4 : 1; Gal. 6 : 10.

The letter is addressed to '*the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia*;' and the order in which these provinces are named has been thought* to imply the easterly position of the Babylon mentioned in 5 : 13, and from which the letter appears to have been written. But the argument has a very slender foundation. The series commences, it is true, from the north-east of Asia Minor, but it does not follow a regular course westward, Cappadocia lying to the east of Galatia, and Bithynia to the east of the proconsular Asia.

A more important question is, whether the believing '*strangers*,' spoken of as '*scattered throughout*' these regions, were of Jewish or Gentile extraction; and a few words are necessary on this point.

Among the 'Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven,' who beheld the wonders of Pentecost, there were found dwellers in 'Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia.' Some of these, it may be presumed, were of the large number on that occasion added to the Church through the preaching of Peter, and they must have carried the Gospel with them on their return to the land of their sojourning. It is known, indeed, that large numbers of Jews were resident in those quarters; and this of itself might lend probability to the tradition formerly referred to, that the missionary labors of our Apostle extended to them. But, on the other hand, there is scarcely any thing in either of his Epistles that can be regarded as certainly favoring the idea of the writer having been at some time personally present with these churches;† while several things show plainly that he was not their founder, and that one principal motive in his now writing to them was his desire to establish them in the truth which they had learned from others.‡ In the Second Epistle he names Paul as one of their previous instructors, and the Book of the Acts makes it probable that to Paul's agency, immediate or indirect, the churches of Asia Minor, in general, owed their

* As by Bengel, Huther, Alford.

† 2 Peter 1 : 16 has been cited as looking that way.

‡ 1 Peter 1 : 12, 25; 5 : 12; 2 Peter 3 : 15.

origin. Converted Jews there no doubt were in most, if not in all, of them. But that in those, with which we are here concerned, the Gentile element largely predominated, seems to be clear enough from many passages in this Epistle.*

What has led not a few commentators, both ancient and modern,† to adopt the opposite view, is this very phrase in the verse before us, '*strangers scattered*,' or, according to the more exact rendering, *sojourners of the dispersion*.‡ Now, the latter of these expressions—the Dispersion—was in familiar use to describe the state of the dispersed Jews living out of Palestine, or as the designation of the Jews themselves so dispersed; as when the inquiry arose among our Lord's hearers, 'Will He go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles?' literally, *the dispersion of the Greeks*.§ And so James writes 'to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad;' or, *which are in the dispersion*.‖

The Greek for the other word, *stranger* or *sojourner*, occurs again in ch. 2 : 11, and in Heb. 11 : 13, in both of which places our version translates it *pilgrim*. Everywhere it implies, not so much the fact of being a stranger, as that of alien residence with strangers.**

So that the whole phrase, *sojourners of the dispersion*, or *dispersed sojourners*,†† represents a people away from home, scattered from their proper centre, and dwelling for the time in foreign parts; a description that does, undoubtedly, apply to *all* Jews living in heathen lands. But this by no means proves that it is here employed to distinguish a particular class of such Jews—those of them, namely, that believed in Christ; especially when every other indication in the Epistle points to a Gentile origin of these communities, and when even in that case the single phrase now under consideration

* See on 1 : 14, 18, 20; 2 : 10; 3 : 6; 4 : 3, 4.

† As Jerome, Calvin, Bengel, etc.

‡ Παρεπιδήμοις διασπορᾶς.

§ John 7 : 35, (τὴν διασπορὰν τῶν Ἑλλήνων.)

‖ James 1 : 1, (ταῖς ἐν τῇ διασπορᾷ.) Comp. the Septuagint, Deut. 30 : 4; Ps. 147 : 2; Isaiah 49 : 6; Judith 5 : 19, etc.

** It is found in the Septuagint, Gen. 23 : 4, and Ps. 39 : 12 for תּוֹשָׁב. In these two instances our version has *sojourner*.

†† For διασπορᾶς is best taken as a genitive of apposition.

rather gains, than loses aught, in appropriateness and beauty. For what are all faithful Christians in this world, no matter what be their earthly lineage, but *dispersed sojourners*—'the children of God scattered abroad' through all regions of the earth, and all the generations of time? They are in the world, but they are not of it. 'The world knoweth them not.' They feel themselves to be 'strangers and pilgrims,' and such, also, was the confession of the fathers, even of those who lived and died in Palestine. 'Here they have no continuing city, but they seek one to come.' Their 'citizenship is in heaven.' 'The Jerusalem which is above . . . is the mother of them all;' and to her bosom they long to ascend, and there rest from their wanderings.*

There is, besides, on this same view, a special fitness, I conceive, and agreeableness to what we have seen to be one main design of the Epistle, in the Jewish Apostle doing thus early, and in the inscription itself, what we shall afterward find him doing again and again.† I mean, transferring the old Hebrew titles and associations, only raised now to a far higher and more spiritual significance, to that great catholic Church of the new dispensation, in which 'there is neither Jew nor Greek.'‡ Nor are there wanting other instances of the kind in the second verse here.

'*Elect according to the forcknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.*'

These words complete the Apostle's description of those to whom he directs his letter, and they furnish certainly a glorious offset to whatever was trying and severe in their earthly lot. Let us carefully consider them.

The first remark I have to make respects the arrangement of the sentence. In the original, the word '*elect*' belongs to the preceding verse, thus: '*Peter, an Apostle of Jesus Christ, to the elect sojourners.*'§ So far was the practical Peter, any

* John 11 : 52 ; 1 John 3 : 1 ; Heb. 11 : 13 ; 13 : 14 ; Phil. 3 : 21 ; Gal. 4 : 26.
† See on ch. 2 : 5, 9, etc. ‡ Galatians 3 : 28.
§ Sin. reads : ἐκλεκτοῖς καὶ παρεπίδημοις, *to the elect and sojourners.*

more than the argumentative Paul, from being ashamed of the word, or afraid to use it, that he sets it in the very forefront, as marking that precise point in the condition of his brethren, which was the most prominent and important in his own estimation, and lay, in fact, at the basis of all his subsequent congratulations and exhortations. In comparison with that, the hardship of their worldly circumstances disappears, and so the second verse proceeds in immediate connection with it, as if nothing whatever had intervened. And what, you may well ask, was this grand, fundamental, overshadowing privilege?

It might be said that, just as the tribes of Israel had always been spoken of in their national capacity as a chosen people, so now the Church of Christ received the same name for a similar reason, as a visible organization occupying the place of the selected, segregated Israel of God. And the statement would be a true one, so far as it goes. For what have we, in the way even of mere external opportunity and advantage, that we do not ultimately owe to sovereign, absolute grace? And nothing less than that surely can be meant, when our outward standing in the Church, with all the influences and means of salvation thereto belonging, is ascribed to an act of divine election. But neither must it be forgotten that, even in regard to the national Israel, there was a sense in which 'they were not all Israel which were of Israel: neither, because they were the seed of Abraham, were they all children.' Within the election there was still another election, in virtue of which Isaac, not Ishmael, was the heir of the promise, and Jacob, not Esau, the object of love, and some, in gospel times, attained to the righteousness which is of faith, while 'the rest were blinded.'*

Now, of which of these two sorts of election our Apostle was here thinking, whether of that which secures merely a visible connection with the visible Church, or of that which takes hold also of saving issues, of this we shall be better able to judge when we have looked at what immediately follows respecting the rule according to which, the means through

* Romans 9 : 6–13, 30; 11 : 5, 7.

which, or the sphere in which, and the results toward which, this election works.

First, the *rule* is the divine foreknowledge: '*Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father;*' the scheme of redemption in all its parts being ever in Scripture represented as flowing from the Fountain of Deity.—Observe, then, that the election of our text is not according to previous differences of character and moral susceptibility in the objects of it, nor according to their actual faith and repentance, nor yet according to God's foreknowledge of these things in them. We shall presently find that, instead of originating in such diversities, it ends in them. The one spring from which it starts, and from which the life-giving streams can never be sundered, is '*the foreknowledge of God the Father.*' And when was it that God first foreknew? Must we not say that on these scattered sojourners, and on every individual of them, the paternal eye of God rested 'from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was?'* In His eternal counsels, He looked upon them with a favorable regard which nothing in them can explain, and all whom He thus foreknew became the subjects of a gracious predestination.† In other words, the whole and sole cause of the election was in God Himself. As He 'chose from the beginning'—'before the foundation of the world'—so the law of His choice, the only law that His own word acknowledges, is 'the good pleasure of His will.'‡ Says the great theologian of the Reformation: 'Everywhere in Scripture is that purpose of God, on which, as on a founda-

* Proverbs 8 : 23.

† Rom. 8 : 29. I am aware that *foreknowledge* is very generally taken here and elsewhere in the sense of *predetermination*, and that almost all commentators on Acts 2 : 23, for instance, keep repeating one after another that there it is synonymous with the '*determinate counsel.*' It is admitted, also, that, in one aspect of the matter, the divine prescience does ultimately rest on the divine purpose, and is inseparable from it, if, indeed, the two are not better regarded as identical. Still, as Scripture everywhere, and most of all in speaking of God, humbles itself to the manner of men, and as with us *foreknowledge* and *foreordination* differ as really in the ideas conveyed, as they do in etymology, the verbal distinction should by no means be given up, as it is by many, in translation. Compare on v. 20.

‡ 2 Thessalonians 2 : 13; Ephesians 1 : 4, 5.

tion, our salvation rests, set in opposition to any merit of ours.'*

Thus far, at least, it is obvious, as the writer probably intended it should be, Peter is in strictest accordance with Paul. Election is according to foreknowledge; and that, whether the particular election spoken of results in the bestowal merely of present church privileges, or of eternal life, with whatever is necessary in order to that. On the latter point, however, we get clearer light from what is said,

Secondly, of the *means through which*, or the *manner in which*, this election works: '*through*,' or '*in*,'† '*sanctification of the Spirit*;' a sanctification, that is, a separation, cleansing, and consecration to holy service, effected by the Holy Spirit, and, therefore, a far deeper and more thorough process than any of those Levitical rites which 'sanctified' only 'to the purifying of the flesh.'‡ This must surely involve something more than simply an outward standing in the visible Church. Here are divine forces in operation, as when the same all-subduing Spirit brooded of old over chaos. And, accordingly, you will observe,

In the third place, that the *results toward which* election looked, and which are thus realized through the intervention and agency of the Spirit, are of proportionate grandeur and value: '*unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ*.' For you must again remark that the several clauses of the second verse are each dependent on the one word '*elect*.' The sojourners were '*elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father*,' as the measure and rule of the divine choice; *elect* '*in sanctification of the Spirit*,' as the medium of its working; *elect* '*unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ*,' as the blessed issue of all.

By '*obedience*' here I understand, at least primarily, *obedience to the truth*, according to the definition of v. 22 of this chapter—what Paul calls 'the obedience of faith'—that great

* Calvin: 'Scriptura autem ubique Dei propositum, in quo fundata est nostra salus, meritis nostris opponit.'

† *ἐν*.

‡ Heb. 9: 13.—See *Lectures on Thessalonians*, p. 544, note 4, for other explanations of the present phrase.

act of the regenerate soul, by which it yields itself unto God, and works 'the work of God' by 'believing on Him whom God hath sent.'* And thereupon at once follows, what is, therefore, named in closest connection with it, the '*sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ*,' whereby the elect pass from under the law and the law's curse into the shelter of the new and eternal covenant. This is that 'blood of sprinkling' which the writer to the Hebrews (12 : 22–24) also mentions last among the wonders and the immunities of Mount Zion, it being in itself the sole and sufficient guarantee of all the rest. In both places there seems to be a direct reference to the scene at Horeb, where the people, having heard 'all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments,' pledged themselves to universal obedience ; and then 'Moses took the blood' of burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, 'and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words.'†

At so much pains, then, you perceive, is our Apostle, in the very inscription of his Epistle, to assure his brethren that, instead of shrinking from any of the faithful followers of his own Master, merely because they were of the Gentiles, he too, now joyfully hailed all such as the true 'circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.'‡

It is proper to add here that, while I have explained the two last clauses as descriptive of the sinner's experience at his first entrance into the fellowship of Christ, there is nothing to hinder us from extending the application of them to his whole subsequent course in the divine life—his progressive inward sanctification by the Spirit, the growing steadfastness and alacrity of his obedience to all the will of God, and the continual 'sprinkling of his heart from an evil conscience' with that blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, which, like the yearly atonement and the daily sacrifice, is ever at hand to 'cleanse us from all sin.'§ All this likewise, together with its consummation in the perfect state, was indeed em-

* Rom. 6 : 13 ; 16 : 26 ; John 6 : 29.
† Exodus 24 : 5–8.
‡ Philippians 3 : 3.
§ Heb. 10 : 22 ; 1 John 1 : 7.

braced in the scope of the Divine election. In the words, already alluded to, of another Apostle, which Peter may have had in his eye when he wrote these verses, 'God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth. . . . He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will. . . . For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the First-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified.'*

After the inscription comes, as usual, the simple, but most beautiful and comprehensive, apostolic salutation, '*Grace unto you, and peace*'—the favor of God, and whatever happiness that confers †—'*be multiplied*'—the former manifested still more and more in the continuance and enlargement of the latter. This variation‡ of Paul's ordinary formula is in keeping with the writer's frequent, careful recognition of the true Christian standing of his readers. Seeing them already in possession of the grace and peace of God, he needed only to pray for their uninterrupted and enlarged enjoyment of these blessings.

I close with a few words of inference and application.

1. In the first place, let no one make himself unhappy in the thought that the open assertion of the Divine sovereignty in the plan and processes of redemption will tempt any honest, intelligent man to a licentious life; and as for dishonest, or simply ignorant, perversions of the truth, for neither of these does the truth hold herself responsible. Be it ever remembered, that they who are chosen to eternal life are no less

* 2 Thess. 2 : 13; Eph. 1 : 4, 5; Rom. 8 : 29, 30.

† *See Lect. on Thess.* pp. 27, 28.

‡ Repeated in the Second Epistle, and adopted by Jude.

chosen to holiness, and that in no other way than by 'repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ'*—those immediate, urgent duties of every man, and to which all are alike summoned—can any man make sure of his own election. To use the exquisite language of Archbishop Leighton: 'Though the mariner sees not the pole-star, yet the needle of the compass, which points to it, tells him which way he sails: thus, the heart that is touched with the loadstone of Divine love, trembling with godly fear, and yet still looking toward God by fixed believing, points at the love of election, and tells the soul that its course is heavenward, toward the haven of eternal rest.' †

2. Again; how great a thing is the work of human salvation, in which all the persons of the Godhead are here represented as concurring—the Father, loving us from eternity; the Son, descending in the fulness of the time to die for us; and the Holy Spirit, flying forth to breathe on our dead nature, that it may live!

3. But then, observe, in the third place, that it is not enough that the depths of heaven are thus stirred with sympathy for man—not enough, that the sacrifice of Calvary is finished; not enough that the rushing, mighty wind of Pentecost has proclaimed the new dispensation of grace. For *you* all is still in vain, unless, submitting yourselves individually to these blessed influences, you obey the Gospel call, and receive the baptism of blood.

4. Lastly, what a consolation is it to the children of God, in all their dispersions, that, however humble their earthly condition may be, and whatever, at any time, the world's hatred of them, the heart of their heavenly Father is ever toward them, with a love that changes not! From the valley of their humiliation, each one of these sojourners, as he lifts his eye to Him who 'inhabiteth eternity,' can say, in all humility and confidence, with David: 'Thou tellest my wanderings: put Thou my tears into Thy bottle: are they not in Thy book?' ‡

* Acts 20 : 21.

† On the principal topics of this Lecture, comp. *Lect. on Thess.* pp. 55–65 and 542–550.

‡ Isaiah 57 : 15; Psalm 56 : 8.

Lecture III.

1 *Peter* 1 : 3–5.

'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.'

'If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature'*—furnished with new powers, and impelled by new motives, to fit him for the new service to which he is called, and the new destiny to which he is appointed. This necessity of a gracious state and endowment in order to the discharge of a Christian's present duty, and the attainment of his future blessedness, is very plainly implied throughout the Epistle; but it is taught with peculiar vividness in the first twelve verses of this chapter, which, in one gushing strain of thankful adoration and noble eloquence, set forth what God had already done for the sojourners, and the transcendent greatness and glory of the salvation, within whose securities they had already entered, as the foundation on which must rest all ethical instruction in the school of Christ—all true and acceptable obedience in the household of faith.

The writer, you remember, had just spoken with emphasis, in the inscription of the letter, of 'the purpose of God according to election,'† as realized and manifested in the case of these scattered converts. And so here, when about to describe more at large their actual condition and prospects, he begins, as Paul does in writing to the Ephesians and once to the Corinthians, by summoning them to unite with him in

* 2 Cor. 5 : 17. † Rom. 9 : 11.

celebrating the Divine source of all spiritual blessings:* '*Blessed*'—adored† and praised—'*be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*'

Such was the loftier and dearer title, under which the believing Jew also now loved to worship the God of the covenant—the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob. It is very frequently modified in translation thus: *God and the Father*‡—*God who is the Father*—*God, even the Father*§—*of our Lord Jesus Christ;* and no doubt the original might mean what these formulas express.‖ But the other equally grammatical construction I consider preferable in this instance, as conveying more fully the precious truth, that the relations of the Church to God are not only established by her Lord and Saviour, but have their ground and guarantee in *His own* relations to God. She is Christ's, and 'Christ is God's.'** In the work of redemption He acted under an immediate Divine authority, and He did that which pleased the Father. Everywhere in Scripture is this personal and official subordination of the Son, in the economy of grace, asserted or assumed.†† As '*the God and Father*,' therefore, '*of our Lord Jesus Christ*'—as sending Him forth on His mission of saving love, and evermore delighting in the fulness and the triumph of His filial obedience—only as thus revealed in and through the Word made flesh, does the Supreme Being draw to Himself the confidence and confessions of man's guilty heart, and the praises of the redeemed.

If now it be asked, And what moved the infinitely Holy and Blessed One to concern Himself about the worthless and the lost? the answer is, Nothing but the benignity of His

* Compare 2 Cor. 1 : 3, and Eph. 1 : 3.

† *εὐλογητὸς*, in the New Testament used only of God.

‡ English version at Col. 1 : 3; and to this Ellicott adheres at Eph. 1 : 3.

§ English version at Rom. 15 : 6; 2 Cor. 1 : 3.

‖ That the phrase, *ὁ Θεὸς καὶ πατήρ=He who is God and Father*—occurs often without a specifying genitive, (the argument urged by Meyer at Rom. 15 : 6,) by no means proves that, in the full expression, as we have it here, the genitive is dependent only on the second noun.

** 1 Cor. 3 : 23.

†† See the Psalms, *passim* (22 : 1; 45 : 7; 89 : 26, etc.;) Matt. 27 : 46; John 20 : 17; Eph. 1 : 17; Heb. 1 : 9; Rev. 3 : 12, 21; etc.; and comp. the *Revision of Rev.* 1 : 6, note *b*.

own nature, and that toward the miserable and the undeserving. '*According to His abundant*'—or *great**—'*mercy*,' says Peter, again, though perhaps unconsciously, echoing the Gentile Apostle. Says the latter to Titus (3 : 5) : 'According to His mercy He saved us.' And in other places—as in that Epistle to the Ephesians (1 : 7 ; 2 : 7) which ours in so many points reflects—he speaks of 'the riches—the exceeding riches—of His grace.' Mercy, then, absolutely free and sovereign, was at once the motive and the measure of the Divine action. And, to know how '*great*' the mercy was, we have but to consider the manner and the fruits of this gracious interposition in our behalf. These are brought before us in the text with equal distinctness and beauty.

'*Blessed* be *the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy*,' and in pursuance of the plan which He had devised from eternity, '*begat us again . . . through*† *the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead*.'

The reference is to the actual regeneration of the individual believer, in the day of his conversion,‡ through the quickening energy of the mighty power, which wrought in Christ when God raised Him from the dead ;§ that resurrection not merely being the Divine confirmation of all the other announcements and promises of the Gospel, but still perpetually manifesting its own reality and force, wherever a dead soul awakes to newness of life. Or perhaps the writer's thought was of the virtual regeneration of all the faithful in that one crowning fact of Christ's earthly history. For you must have noticed how common it is in the New Testament to find the Church spoken of as having died when Christ died ; as having risen, when He rose ; and as now seated with Him in the heavenly places.‖ I think it not improbable that our Apostle here glances at this favorite doctrine of Paul.

* The English version nowhere else renders *πολύς abundant*.

† *ἀναγεννήσας . . . διά*. Peter alone of New Testament writers uses this verb, here and at verse 23.

‡ Comp. James 1 : 18 ; Tit. 3 : 5 ; 1 John 5 : 1, etc. § Eph. 1 : 19, 20.

‖ Comp. the historic time of such texts as Rom. 7 : 4, *Ye were put to death ;* 2 Cor. 5 : 14, *one died . . . all died*, etc.

And, at any rate, his readers could not fail to be reminded of words, which had already been addressed by the latter to one of their own churches : 'God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, quickened* us together with Christ—by grace ye are saved.'

In both passages, you perceive the regeneration of a sinner is regarded as evidence of the greatness of the Divine mercy, and this in respect of the means whereby it is effected—to wit, the resurrection from the dead of the Son of God. But now consider also the nature of the effect itself, and its sure and glorious consequences.

God alone is the author of it, as truly and as directly as He alone created the light. Whatever secondary agency or instrumentality may be employed, they who are the subjects of this new birth are 'born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.' They are therefore called, by a different title from that which nature confers, the 'children of God,' being made 'partakers of the Divine nature,' and having 'put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him'—'after God created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.'†

For you must beware of supposing that any outward reformation of the life, however sudden and striking, however extensive, and however permanent, is what Scripture lays so much stress upon, as that without which a man 'cannot enter into—cannot see—the kingdom of God.' This is altogether a secret spiritual process, invisible like the turnings and courses of the wind, however mighty the effects which attest its power, and mark its direction.‡ It is the circumcision of the heart—the taking away the stony heart out of the flesh, and giving a heart of flesh. Or, to use still another sacred figure, it is the opening of 'the eyes of the heart,' and the immediate inshining of the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the

* Eph. 2 : 5, 6, (*συνεζωοποίησεν.*)

† John 1 : 12, (*τέκνα,*) 13 ; 2 Peter, 1 : 4 ; Col. 3 : 10 ; Eph. 4 : 24, (*ὁσιότητι τῆς ἀληθείας.*)

‡ John 3 : 3, 5, 8.

face of Jesus Christ.* It is, accordingly, described as a being 'delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son;' or, as in the second chapter of our Epistle, a 'being called out of darkness into God's marvellous light.' In a word, it is the soul's resurrection from the death of sin and the curse—that 'passing from death into life,' which is watched by all eyes in heaven, and which gives joy among the angels of God, because a new heir of glory has been born.

For 'if children, then heirs.' The inference is one to which the renewed nature of itself instinctively bounds. You recollect how readily the Apostle John also passes from the assurance of sonship to the anticipation of a glorious future. 'Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.' And hence, too, the expression in the text: '*Who begat us again unto a lively hope.*' As if he had said: No sooner did we 'receive the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father,' and so come to know 'the love that God hath to us,' than we found ourselves in a region bright with hope, a hope which, like the morning, spreads itself over earth and heaven. What evil could befall those whom the Almighty God now owned for His sons and daughters? And what conceivable or possible good would He withhold from them?†

No wonder that Peter calls this '*a lively hope*,' or rather '*a living*‡ *hope*.' Dead hopes—sickly, dying hopes—are common enough among men. But here, at last, is such a hope as becomes the children of the living God. This hope has life in itself, and it imparts life, and has life also, eternal life, for its object.§ Even in the dust of the sepulchre blooms this

* Rom. 2 : 29; (Deut. 30 : 6;) Ezek. 11 : 19; Eph. 1 : 18 (*τῆς καρδίας*—the true reading;) 2 Cor. 4 : 6; Col. 1 : 13; 1 John 3 : 14.

† Rom. 8 : 15, 17; 1 John 3 : 2; 4 : 16.

‡ *ζῶσαν.*

§ De Wette. The phrase *living hope* is neither 'a life of hope,' (Alford,) nor *a hope of life* (*ἐλπίδα ζωῆς*—a reading mentioned by Mill as found in one of Stephens's manuscripts. It is favored also by the Syriac, and two or three Fathers;) though *ἐλπίδα ζῶσαν* has sometimes been rendered in the latter sense, and Luther, Calvin, and others so explain it.

heavenly flower, and over it, as over the living Christ, death hath no more dominion.*

To the resurrection of Christ, indeed, the very existence of Christian hope is here traced. 'If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins,'† and a darkness more terrible than that of the grave enshrouds eternity. But when the weeping children of God gather to the place where their Lord lay, and, behold, it is empty, they look up to where He stands afar at the right hand of God, and, calling to mind His own dear promise, they say one to another, Because He lives, we shall live also.‡

Some,§ accordingly, would even construe the clause thus: 'Begat us again to a hope *living*—having its life and strength—*in consequence of the resurrection of Christ*.' And this, we have just seen, contains a great truth. But I prefer, nevertheless, the common arrangement, according to which Christ's resurrection is presented rather as the medium of the regeneration, and then hope as the immediate result of regeneration so effected.

For this reason also the object of the hope is properly called '*an inheritance*,' as being the children's patrimony—their birthright. They are 'heirs of God,' being 'joint-heirs with Christ'—the First-begotten of the dead—the First-born among many brethren. So secure is the title as vested in Him, and so secure the hope that rests on it, as a hope that 'maketh not ashamed,'‖ that the new birth is here represented as having the very same immediate reference to the future inheritance as to the present hope itself. To be begotten again to this living hope is the same thing as to be begotten again to the inheritance.**

And of this inheritance what great things are spoken! It is 'a rest' for God's wanderers—His children's home. It is

* Rom. 6 : 9. † 1 Cor. 15 : 17.

‡ Matt. 28 : 6; Acts 7 : 56; John 14 : 19.

§ Œcumenius, Bengel, Moldenhawer, Steiger, De Wette, and others.

‖ Rom. 8 : 17, 29; 5 : 5; Rev. 1 : 5.

** Very few adopt Jachmann's erroneous connection of v. 4 with the word *hope* in v. 3—*hope in an inheritance.*

'eternal life'—'eternal glory'—'a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' It is 'a city which hath foundations'—'a kingdom which cannot be moved'—'the Paradise of God'—'that which is perfect.' It is to 'be for ever with the Lord'—to 'see Him as He is'—to 'be like Him'—to 'sit with Him in His throne,' and follow Him to 'living fountains of waters,' when God shall have 'wiped away all tears' from our eyes.*

But in vain do we strive to lift our hearts or our imagination to any clear and adequate apprehension of what is still a hidden mystery. The Apostle himself attempts no description or inventory of 'the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.'† By way merely of implied contrast with all the portions that earth can give, he says of the saints' inheritance that it is '*incorruptible, and undefiled, and unfading*,‡ *reserved in the heavens*.'§ It is '*incorruptible*,' because, in all that pertains, so to speak, to its physical substance and constitution, it is absolutely imperishable—subject to no loss, or rupture, or derangement. 'Violence is not heard in that land, wasting nor destruction within her borders.'‖ It is '*undefiled*,' as being free from every taint or stain of moral pollution. There shall in no wise enter into it any thing common, and that worketh abomination and a lie.'** It is, moreover, '*unfading*'—unwithering. Ages of ages do not impair its beauty. Its tree of life knows no decay. Its pastures are ever fresh. 'The river of God's pleasures' is ever full. 'The Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory.'††

And when, finally, it is added, '*reserved in the heavens*,'

* 2 Thess. 1 : 7 ; John 14 : 2 ; Matt. 25 : 46 ; 2 Tim. 2 : 10, (1 Peter 5 : 10 ;) 2 Cor. 4 : 17 ; Heb. 11 : 10 ; 12 : 28 ; 1 Cor. 13 : 10 ; 1 Thess. 4 : 17 ; 1 John 3 : 2 ; Rev. 2 : 7 ; 3 : 21 ; 7 : 17 ; 21 : 4.

† 1 Corinthians 2 : 9.

‡ ἀμάραντον—found nowhere else in the New Testament—Sin. reads : *incorruptible, and unfading, and undefiled.*

§ οὐρανοῖς. Comp. *Lect. on Thess.* p. 73. Here Sin. reads : ἐν οὐρανῷ, *in heaven.*

‖ Isaiah 60 : 18.

** Rev. 21 : 27—according to the now received reading, and a closer rendering.

†† Psalm 36 : 8 ; Isaiah 60 : 19.

that at once accounts for, and confirms, all that has been said of its security and its excellence. '*In the heavens*'—the highest and holiest part of God's creation, inaccessible to storms or the foot of foe, where 'neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal'* —there, where God Himself and the angels dwell, is this inheritance '*reserved*.' Among God's treasures, under His own eye, and within the shelter of His omnipotence, it is *laid up* and *kept—has been laid up* and *kept*† from the beginning—'prepared from the foundation of the world.'‡ And its being still kept there implies that the time of possession has not yet arrived. The inheritance is '*reserved in the heavens*,' the fruition of it being yet a future thing. The rest 'remaineth for the people of God.'§ This new wine of the kingdom God keeps‖ to the last.

And for whom is it kept? For the wise, and the mighty, and the noble? For the philosophers and statesmen, the kings and conquerors of earth? No, says Peter; '*for you*,'** you, the scattered sojourners, strangers and pilgrims; for you, the poor of this world—its homeless wanderers, having here no certain dwelling-place.†† And, that all risk of failure of the ultimate attainment may be the more utterly precluded, the same Almighty love which keeps the inheritance keeps also the heirs. If the former is '*reserved in the heavens*,' the latter are no less '*kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation*.'

Literally, this is, '*Who in the power of God are guarded*.‡‡ The Divine power, by which they are kept, is not any external

* Matthew 6 : 20.

† So the English version translates τηρέω fifty-eight times out of seventy-five. (See note *g* in the *Revision of Jude* 1; also *Lect. on Thess.* p. 397.) Here and at Col. 1 : 5 the perfect participle is employed.

‡ Matt. 25 : 34. (Comp. 2 Peter 2 : 17.)

§ Hebrews 4 : 9.

‖ The same Greek verb is used at John 2 : 10.

** The reading of the English margin, *for us*, was taken into the received Greek text from Stephens's third edition. Later editors have given it up.

†† James 2 : 5; 1 Cor. 4 : 11.

‡‡ *τοὺς ἐν δυνάμει Θεοῦ φρουρουμένους*. Comp. the *ἐν* of Eph. 6 : 10; 2 Tim. 2 : 1, etc.

force, but a spiritual element in which they live, and which to them so abiding is the primary cause of their safety. They are thus '*guarded*,' as in a garrison, or strong city with walls and bulwarks—amidst the munitions of rocks—from the weakness and treachery of their own hearts, and from all the malice of earth and hell. 'They that trust in the Lord are as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about His people, from henceforth even for ever.'* In reality, therefore, they are just as safe, though surrounded by the snares and agitations of this present evil world, as their inheritance itself in the heavens.

But as it is '*through faith*' that perishing sinners enter this fortress and high tower at the first, so faith alone enables them still to maintain their position there. What, indeed, is faith, but the laying hold on the outstretched arm of God? And the feeblest soul that is so upheld cannot perish. It is true that the strength to lay hold, and to keep hold, is of God; and this truth likewise is embraced in the condensed statement of the text. The faith, which is 'the gift of God,' remains itself under the perpetual guardianship of His gracious power; and thus it is that none is able to pluck the believer out of the Father's hand.† The Apostle wrote these words from the depth of his own experience, and very probably, I think, in distinct recollection of that crisis in his own spiritual history, when the merciful Saviour, whom in the sudden surprise of fear he denied, prayed for him that his faith might not fail.

Observe now once more the result to which all this tends: '*unto salvation*'—full and eternal deliverance from sin and sorrow and death, 'with eternal glory.'‡ This, and nothing short of this, was the end of the faith of these dispersed children of God, and the bright object of their living hope. For this they

* Isaiah 26 : 1; 33 : 16; Ps. 125 : 1, 2. The military metaphor is recognized by expositors generally. Comp. the other New Testament places where this verb occurs: 2 Cor. 11 : 32; Gal. 3 : 23; Phil. 4 : 7; and, in the Septuagint, Judith 3 : 6; Esdr. 4 : 56; Wisd. 17 : 16.

† Eph. 2 : 8; John 10 : 29.

‡ 2 Timothy 2 : 10.

had been chosen from of old ; for this begotten again,* sanctified by the Spirit—sprinkled with the blood of Jesus Christ ; and for this they were now also daily guarded by the mighty hand of God through the perils and trials of life and of death.

Of this great salvation it is still further affirmed that it was even then '*ready to be revealed in the last time.*' It had not yet appeared. The heirs were still prisoners of hope ; and hope that is seen is not hope.† The veil, that hides eternity, still hung solemn and impenetrable to mortal gaze. But within that veil, and on the part of God, all things were ready, even to the crowns and sceptres of His lowly and suffering children. They but awaited their revelation, when the set time should come. And that time is '*the last time*'—the end of this dispensation of mingled privilege and sorrow—the time for which all preceding times are but the preparation—the time of 'songs and everlasting joy.'‡ Then, indeed, the veil shall be lifted and the panorama of glory shall be seen.

Such, my hearers, is the present high standing and security —such the living hope—and such the blessed heritage of the children of God. Are they yours ? Or have you, according to that stern word of Peter to the deceiver of Samaria, 'neither part nor lot in this matter'?§ Alas ! then, and what have you in their stead ? Hearts unquickened by any filial yearnings toward the Author of your being—a life unshielded by the grace and promises of God—the meat which perisheth—the water of which a man drinks, and thirsts again—the uncertainty of riches—the pleasures of sin for a season—the empty honors which come from man—these frail tabernacles of the flesh—a hope, if not that of the hypocrite, yet at the best bounded by the grave—while, for all that is beyond, you have no hope.‖ Do not, however, so far deceive yourselves as to

* Very few, however, (Calvin, Steiger, Olshausen,) connect the words '*unto salvation*'—like the words *unto a living hope*, and *unto an inheritance*—immediately with *begotten again.*

† 1 John 3 : 2 ; Zech. 9 : 12 ; Rom. 8 : 24.

‡ Daniel 8 : 17 ; Isaiah 35 : 10.

§ Acts 8 : 21.

‖ John 4 : 13 ; 5 : 44 ; 6 : 27 ; 1 Tim. 6 : 17, (πλούτου ἀδηλότητι ;) Heb. 11 : 25 ; 2 Cor. 5 : 1 ; Job 8 : 13 ; Eph. 2 : 12 ; (1 Thess. 4 : 13.)

suppose that, entering that future world as you have hitherto lived in this—unregenerate, unbelieving, unreconciled to God by the sprinkling of the blood of Calvary—you shall find *no* portion there. If, in the face of all warnings of earth and heaven, you will insist on committing yourselves to a blind venture—to a leap in the dark—see ye to it. Scripture speaks throughout not more clearly of the coming revelation of glory, than it does of a coming revelation of wrath—heaped-up treasures of wrath which eternity will not exhaust—the sad inheritance of darkness and woe.

But, behold, to you I again preach Christ, as 'the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world,' and so 'delivers us from the wrath to come.'* Hearken to the voice that speaketh from heaven: 'Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest—it is polluted.'† Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Go, wash in the fountain of His blood. And in that same hour the accumulated blessedness of grace and glory, whereof our Apostle wrote to the sojourners of the dispersion—all, all will be yours. Standing by the cross and the open sepulchre, you too will feel the throbbings of the new life, and through your tears of joy you will discern the beaming star which, through the mists and storms of time, and amid the crumbling of all the thrones of earth—when every other light in the cottages of the poor and in the palaces of kings, has gone out in the blackness of darkness for ever—shall still shine on, until it guide you to the place where Jesus is.

And if, brethren, that heavenly vision has already been vouchsafed unto you, you will need no urging to join the Apostle in '*blessing*' Him from whom such blessings flow. Having received all, you will not glory as if you had not received it. Your humility will be equal to your gratitude, as you 'give thanks to the Father, which hath made you meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.'‡

* John 1 : 29; 1 Thess. 1 : 10. † Micah 2 : 10.

‡ 1 Cor. 4 : 7; Col. 1 : 12.

LECTURE IV.

1 *PETER* 1 : 6–9.

'WHEREIN ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.'

HITHERTO the Apostle has spoken chiefly of God's gracious purpose and actings toward these dispersed strangers or sojourners. He now goes on to describe their views and feelings in regard to all this.

Some,* indeed, take the first verb in v. 6 as in the imperative mood—*wherein greatly rejoice.* But this makes an abrupt and premature transition to the hortative style, and has nothing of its own to recommend it. 'It exhorts,' says Leighton, 'in a more insinuating and persuasive manner, that it may be so, to urge it on them, that it is so.' Others,† again, give the word the force of a future tense, and connect the sixth verse immediately with the end of the fifth, in this way: *Wherein* —that is, *in which last time—ye shall greatly rejoice.* In support of this interpretation several things are alleged, which, however, appear to me to be insufficient. Thus it is said, that in this section of the Epistle the writer's method is to join each successive sentence to the last word of the one preced-

* Augustine, Macknight, Burton, Trollope, etc.

† The Syriac, Clementine Vulgate, (for the *Codex Amiatinus* retains the present,) Luther, Tyndale, Benson, Brown, Huther, Wiesinger, Alford, etc. It is worth noting, also, that Origen (*Exhort. ad Mart.* 39) actually has the future form, *ἀγαλλιάσεσθε.*

ing.* But on examination this will be found to be only partially true.—Then it is supposed that the futurity of the joy is here expressly contrasted with the present grief, and that the latter is even spoken of as, in its relation to the former, a thing of the past.† But the contrast may very well be between the present, as a time whose joy is dashed with sorrow, and the brighter day that is to come, when 'sorrow and sighing shall flee away.'‡ The joy, moreover, is not only present but continuous and everlasting, whereas the grief can scarcely be said to have any prolonged existence. It is but a passing taste of sorrow, the next hour forgotten.—And, finally, to object that the Epistle throughout represents this life as the season rather of the Christian's suffering, is plainly to overlook such passages as those in the third and fourth chapters: 'If ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye. . . . Rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings. . . . If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you. . . . If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.'

It is true, the expression in the text is a very emphatic one: '*ye greatly rejoice*,' or '*ye exult*;'§ and even this emphasis is intensified at v. 8, where yet the future reference is really more difficult than in this first instance.‖ There, too, however, it is claimed by some that 'the phrases, "a joy unspeakable and full of glory," are too strong to describe the Christian's habitual feelings in the present state.'** But, as we have occasion continually to remark, it is not so much 'the

* 'By means of a relative pronoun,' adds Pott.

† On this last point Alford lays the chief stress—ἀγαλλιᾶσθε. . . ἄρτι λυπηθέντες.

‡ Isaiah 35 : 10.

§ ἀγαλλιᾶσθε. This verb (ἀγάλλομαι is the classical form) is used by the Seventy for גִּיל in Ps. 2 : 11; for שׂמח in Ps. 40 : 16, etc.; agreeably to which, and to the doubtful etymology, ἀγαν ἅλλομαι, (to leap much,) Leighton here speaks of 'this joy, this exultation, and leaping for joy.' Comp. the *Revision of Rev.* 19 : 7, note *f*.

‖ As Huther himself seems to feel.

** Brown, Wiesinger also, and Alford, especially press δεδοξασμένῃ. But neither this nor the other points made by Wiesinger can, to my mind, overcome the great unlikelihood of the temporal force of ἀγαλλ. being quite different from that of ἀγαπᾶτε, and of the two participles dependent on itself.

measure of actual and ordinary attainment' that regulates apostolic descriptions of the new man in Christ Jesus, 'as what is through divine grace attainable, and in itself accordant with the spirit of faith and hope.'*

Let it also be observed, that, strong as the language is, it is much the same as that employed by our Lord in announcing the duty and privilege of His disciples, when in just such circumstances of outward trial as those in which the sojourners now found themselves: 'Rejoice,' He had said, 'and be exceeding glad,' or *exult;* for it is the very word that occurs in our text. And so of the Man of Sorrows Himself it is recorded that, on one occasion, when contemplating the sovereign condescension displayed in the dispensation of grace, He 'rejoiced'—*exulted*—'in spirit,'† and that while the burden of the curse still pressed upon Him.

There are even many facts in our ordinary human experience, that render quite conceivable this triumph of the soul over all surrounding tribulations and distresses. What cares the patient, toiling man of science for the incredulity and jeers of his neighbors, or the vexations of poverty, when first the obscurity and meanness of his lonely chamber are lighted up by the flash of some great discovery? How superior to threats and discouragements of every kind was the mighty heart of Columbus, as he calmly forced his way through the veil of waters toward this unseen world! How far is the fond mother from repining at—how little is she conscious of—her own bodily exhaustion, long as she may have watched with sleepless anxiety by the sick-bed of her child—ever hoping against hope—when at last she is assured that the crisis is past, and she, so to speak, 'receives her dead raised to life again!'‡ Nay, how often has the bitterness of death itself been overcome to the soldier on the battle-field, and the patriot on the scaffold, by the silent anticipation of the freedom and glory which their agonies secured for the country they loved! And need we, then, wonder, if the confessors of Jesus have gone singing to the stake, and their shout of victory has been stifled only by the flames into which they sank?

* *Lect. on Thess.* p. 350.

† Matt. 5 : 12; Luke 10 : 21, (ἠγαλλιάσατο.)

‡ Hebrews 11 : 35.

For consider, I pray you, the sources of *their* joy, as these are indicated by the words before us. '*Wherein*,' says Peter, '*ye exult*'—in what? Not, as I conceive, *in the last time*, mentioned in the fifth verse, whether viewed as the period of future triumph, or as itself the object of a present joyful hope;* but in that general state of gracious privilege, security, and expectation, which had previously been described—'the whole complex sense,' as Leighton expresses it,† 'of the preceding verses.' In other words, these ancient converts exulted, as they had good reason to do, in all that the great mercy and power of God had already done, were now doing, and were engaged still to do, for them—in their regeneration, their safe keeping, and their certain, speedy introduction to the glorious inheritance of His children.

These various blessings, moreover, were every one secured to them only through the mediation of Jesus Christ, and accordingly you are now to mark how it is in the meditation of His person, that this tide of joy rises highest, and swells to the overflowing of the whole renewed nature. '*Whom having not seen, ye love;*' for, where there is no love for Christ, there can be no rejoicing in Him, or on account of Him. But, on the other hand, there is always a sense of joy in the love of any worthy object, and, when the love is known to be reciprocal, the joy is far more than doubled. In the present case both conditions of a joyful love existed, and in the highest possible degree. For surely there is not on earth, nor in heaven, another being so 'altogether lovely' as Jesus Christ, nor can any love be compared to that with which He loves His own. Basking in the sunshine of that love, and reflecting something of its ardors from their own hearts toward the glorious Source of it, the suffering saints might well forget

* Though this reference has been adopted by many, besides those named on p. 36, notes 1, 2, 3, as by Œcumenius, Theophylact, Rosenmüller, etc. The Dutch Annotations construe the pronoun with *God*, as named in v. 5, *in whom*, etc.; Hensler and Penn with *salvation* of that verse, supplying the word *thing* (πράγματι) to the neuter pronoun.

† Apparently translating Calvin: 'Articulus *in quo* refert totum illud complexum de spe salutis in cœlis repositæ.' Comp. ch. 4:4; also *Lect. on Thess.* pp. 478–9, 546.

their sorrows, and the world's frowns. 'My Beloved is mine, and I am His'*—in this one calm conclusion—this deepest consciousness—of the believing soul is an inexhaustible fountain of joy.

It is mentioned also as an honorable distinction of these disciples, that they loved the Saviour whom they had '*not seen*,' or, as the word used to be read, without *knowing*† Him—knowing Him, that is, as Peter had known Him, personally and 'after the flesh.'‡ They could but imagine—they could not from the records of their own observation recall—the meekness and gentleness of His looks and ways, the gracious tones of His voice, or the melting, subduing, radiance of His eyes. They had not been by, when he 'took' the little children 'in His arms,§ put His hands upon them, and blessed them;' or when the 'woman which was a sinner' was not only suffered to 'wash His feet with tears, and wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kiss His feet, and anoint them with the ointment,' but left the holy presence pardoned and blessed. They had not watched Him as He stood and wept over Jerusalem, and by the grave of Lazarus, or poured forth His soul in prayer for those whom the Father had 'given Him out of the world,' and 'for them also which should believe on Him through their word.'‖ These and a hundred other such scenes had impressed themselves indelibly on the memory and the heart of the Apostle. But they to whom he now wrote did not thus know the Lord. How, then, had they learned to love Him?

The explanation is furnished when it is added: '*in whom, though now ye see* Him *not, yet believing*.' The faith and the love were both present things, and well might the joy be also. Theirs was the blessedness of those who 'have not seen, and

* Song 5 : 16 ; 2 : 16.

† No good example has been adduced of *οἶδα*, in its primary sense, *I have seen*. The reference by Macknight and Burton to Matt. 2 : 2, 9, 10, is palpably erroneous. Comp. the *Revision of Jude* 5, note *i*. For *εἰδότες*, of the received text, however, the manuscripts Sin. B and C have *ἰδότες*, and this is edited by Beza, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford.

‡ 2 Corinthians 5 : 16.

§ Mark 10 : 16, (*ἐναγκαλισάμενος*.)

‖ Luke 7 : 37, 38, 48, 50 ; 19 : 41 ; John 11 : 35 ; 17 : 6, 20.

yet have believed,'* and through faith alone have obtained that full conviction of the truth as it is in Jesus, which mere sight never wrought—never could work—in any man. In order to such a gracious result there was needed in every case 'the Spirit of wisdom and revelation,' whose office it is to receive of Christ's, and show it unto the soul.† That Spirit was now breathing through the realms of heathen darkness, wherever the Gospel came; and under His influence poor, benighted idolaters, even in the mountainous seclusion of Asia Minor, aroused themselves. They looked, and listened, and 'Christ was formed in them.'‡ For, since the joint testimony of the Spirit and the word all centred in Christ, they who believed, believed in Him§ as the Son of the living and true God—man's only Saviour, their own Saviour, from sin and wrath. And so faith worked by love of this heavenly Benefactor, and love, while laboring in all things to please Him, yearned after still closer communion with One so great, so good, so fair—longed to see His face, and fall at His feet, and worship Him. When assured, therefore, that this deepest instinct of the new creature in Christ Jesus was yet to be fully satisfied—that it was only '*now*' ‖ that they '*saw* Him *not*'**—that the separation was but for a season—that He himself profoundly shared in the fond desire—that He had but gone to prepare a place for them, and was about to come again to receive them unto Himself, that His joy in them, and their joy in Him, might be full—ah! then, indeed, faith showed its power as 'the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen,'†† and their hearts leaped forth

* John 20 : 29. † Eph. 1 : 17; John 16 : 14. ‡ Gal. 4 : 19.

§ The words εἰς ὅν (*in whom*) are connected with ἀγαλλιᾶσθε (*ye rejoice*) by Castalio, Brown, Huther. The last, however, acknowledges that ἀγαλλ. εἰς is without example, while πιστεύειν εἰς is very common. The construction, ὁρῶντες εἰς (Macknight, Scott, Peile) is still more unsuitable.

‖ Luther, Erasmus, Calvin, Bengel, and others, join ἄρτι to πιστεύοντες, *now believing;* Castalio and Wesley, with ἀγαλλιᾶσθε, *ye now rejoice.* Weisinger attaches it to πιστεύοντες, (*believing,*) but allows it also to influence ὁρῶντες, (*seeing.*)

** The μή of this clause, says Steiger, is 'a strong expression of the subjective sense of what is wanting;' whereas, οὐκ of the preceding clause is 'merely an objective, historical negation.' The English reader will understand that these two particles are both rendered *not* in v. 8.

†† Hebrews 11 : 1.

through all encompassing clouds to the brightness beyond, *exulting* with joy unspeakable† and full of glory*'—a joy which only the service and the songs of eternity could express—a joy already *glorified*,‡ like the face of Moses as he descended from the mount, or of Stephen in the transfiguration of his martyrdom. This joy of faith is itself the sure dawn of glory. As an old Roman Catholic expositor§ comments on the word: 'This joy of yours is invested and suffused with glory; for it is on account of the heavenly glory, which ye hope for, that ye rejoice; and so this joy is a foretaste of that glory.' Or, as Peter himself expresses it: '*Receiving the end of your*‖ *faith, the salvation of your souls.*'

This ninth verse sets forth the present and permanent privilege of the believers, as explaining and justifying the greatness of their joy.

The salvation of the Gospel is a *salvation of souls*, or a soul-salvation, not as excluding the body from the benefits of the redemption, but as reaching the whole man, even that noblest and innermost part of our nature out of which are the issues of life, and within which sin and the curse are the most strongly intrenched. It is no mere amelioration or adornment of the outward life. The soul itself is saved from whatever saddens, enfeebles, darkens, and defiles. So complete and thorough and radical is the salvation, which is '*the end of faith*'—that at which faith aims, and in which it inevitably results. Nay, says the Apostle, ye are now '*receiving*' it—even now *bearing off* that prize of your high calling in the present earnest of the Spirit, in the peace of reconciliation, in

* The same word as in v. 6. For the future reference of the verb in this instance (*ye shall exult*) Wiesinger urges a variety of considerations; most of which have already been met on pp. 36, etc.; and, all together, they do not overcome the great unlikelihood of the temporal force of ἀγαλλιᾶσθε (*ye exult*) being quite different from that of ἀγαπᾶτε, (*ye love*,) and of the two participles (*seeing—believing*) dependent on itself.

† ἀνεκλάλητος—in the New Testament found only here.

‡ δεδοξασμένῃ.

§ Cornelius a Lapide: 'Lætitia hæc vestra vestita et perfusa est gloria, quia ob gloriam cœlestem, quam speratis, lætamini; adeoque hæc lætitia est prægustus illius gloriæ.'

‖ Tischendorf cancels ὑμῶν.

your growing sanctification, in the eager realizations of faith and hope, the prelibations of your final and eternal joy.*

You will have observed, that in these remarks I have brought together all that is here said of the joyful experience of the sojourners. We must now glance back at what the writer, on the first mention of their inward triumph, hastens to subjoin, as it were parenthetically or incidentally, respecting their adverse circumstances in this world.

'*Though now for a season,*' *for a little while,*† '*if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations.*' Some of the old interpreters‡ take the word rendered *for a season* as an adverb not of time, but (as in Luke 7 : 47) of degree; as if we should say, *slightly grieved.* But, as this tends merely to abate the designed contrast between the exultation and the grief, we shall do well to adhere to the sense of our English version. What is meant is, that the conflict of emotions, however sharp while it lasted, would soon cease. But, when nearly all commentators understand the Apostle as referring to the brevity of human life, the mistake, I think, is obvious. The entire context both before and after suggests rather the shortness of the interval, which should precede the consummation at the coming of the Lord; as when it is said, ch. 4 : 7, 'The end of all things is at hand.'

Till then the Church, like her Lord in the wilderness, and throughout His whole career on earth, is *in*§ *temptations*—a word, which, as used in Scripture, includes all perilous or afflictive circumstances of whatever sort, in so far as these either put to the test what is good in a man, or tend to provoke his evil tendencies. It is true, that modern extra-biblical use rather restricts it to the second of these ideas, so as to denote an incitement or solicitation to sin; and therefore

* There is no need, therefore, of forcing (as some even do, who allow the joy to be a present thing; as Castalio, Beausobre and L'Enfant, Carpzov, etc.) a future signification on κομιζόμενοι. (See on ch. 5 : 4—the same verb as in Luke 7 : 37—as if here equivalent to the κομιούμενοι of 2 Pet. 2 : 13, *shall receive.*)

† ὀλίγον.

‡ Syriac, Vulgate, (*modicum;* for which Beza, Piscator, and others substitute *paululum;* Cocceius and S. Schmidt, *parum,*) etc. Steiger also prefers this view.

§ ἐν.

the modern versions generally exchange it here for *trials*. But this again, at least in its popular acceptation as nearly synonymous with *sufferings*, is perhaps too limited and superficial, and fails to represent the inward, spiritual bearing.

These brethren, then, even while exulting, as we have seen in the abundance and preciousness of their spiritual privileges, were at the same time beset by temptations—such as were not merely painful to flesh and blood, but were fitted, and by their adversaries expressly intended, to shake the steadfastness of their faith. And these temptations were '*manifold*' —very various in their origin, as well as in the nature and severity of their assault; temptations, we can easily imagine, from unbelieving members of the same household—from former friends, now alienated and embittered—from the malignant misconceptions and slanderous imputations of the heathen around—from the loss of social position—from the straitening or withdrawal of the means and opportunities of earning their daily bread—and now, above all, from the growing jealousy and irritation, the open hostility, and still more and more menacing aspect, of great Rome herself. Is it strange, that, amid so many distresses and rising terrors, the children of God, begotten again for far higher and better things, '*were in heaviness*,' or, according to the usual rendering of the word, *were grieved?**

What, then, are we to understand by the phrase, '*if need be*,' in this sixth verse? Some† take it affirmatively: *seeing that*, or *since, it is needful* that ye thus suffer. But, even supposing that to be the sense, it has been well remarked that 'the Apostle expresses it more delicately by suggesting the possibility that there *might* be need of it, instead of saying absolutely that there *was* need.'‡ It is better, therefore, to retain the conditional form. Indeed, since Christians are not all tried alike, nor equally at all times§—nor are they to rush into trials, but endure them only when God sends them‖—what the writer intended may rather be this: '*though now for*

* λυπηθέντες, (Sin. G. :—τάς;) nowhere else translated as here.
† Calvin, Bengel, Benson, Carpzov, Macknight, Brown, etc.
‡ Barnes. § Œcumenius. ‖ Luther, Aretius, Beza, etc.

a little while, if'—whenever, so far as—'*it is needful*'*—for God's glory and your own good—'*ye are grieved through manifold temptations.*' Or the words may possibly have been thrown in to suggest a doubt, whether, numerous and formidable as the temptations were, it was necessary for the children of grace and heirs of glory to yield to grief on account of them—especially considering the gracious purpose that was to be served by them all. This is stated in the seventh verse:

"*That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing*'—or *revelation*†—'*of Jesus Christ.*'

The general sense of this is as obvious as it is beautiful. 'Your enemies think evil against you; but God means it unto good. These very temptations, though for the present not joyous, but grievous, are really part of your preparation for your inheritance. They are God's fiery crucible for the refining of your faith, that it may then be made up into a crown meet to be worn in the day of Christ's revelation, and the manifestation along with Him of all the sons of God.'‡ Such, I say, is plainly the general idea. It is more difficult to determine the precise significance and relations of the several clauses.

Much depends on the first words, '*the trial of your faith.*' This has been thought to mean *the criterion, or test,*§ *of your faith;* to wit, the temptations. And then it is the afflictions which try faith that are represented as '*much more precious*'‖

* *δέον ἐστίν* Tischendorf omits *ἐστί*, (Sin. B.)

† *ἀποκαλύψει.*

‡ Gen. 50 : 20; Heb. 12 : 10; Rom. 8 : 19.

§ This classical sense of *δοκίμιον* (compare the Septuagint, Prov. 27 : 21. More doubtful is Ps. 12 : 6) is retained by many at the parallel, James 1 : 3, (the only other place in the New Testament where the word is found;) and here by Cocceius in his commentary, (for this does not agree with his version,) Pyle, Burton, etc. Comp. the use of *δοκιμή* in 2 Cor. 13 : 3.

‖ *πολὺ τιμιώτερον* is now read as one word, *πολυτιμότερον*, (Sin, etc.) This is included by many in the predicate—*may be found much more precious*, (so the Syriac as interpreted by some—not Tremellius; the Amiatine Vulgate; Luther, Pott, Steiger, De Wette, Brown, Huther, etc.) But that the faith of Christians, or the trial of it, is of greater moment than gold, or the trial of it, is something

than the fire that tries gold, the result in the former case being so much more valuable; or, perhaps, as themselves more precious than gold. Much more frequently, however, '*the trial of your faith*' is supposed to denote the *genuineness*, the *excellent quality*, of faith, as that is ascertained by the process of testing.* And akin to this is the explanation, *your tried faith*, adopted or sanctioned by many.† But on the whole, I prefer—what is also, I think, the most common interpretation—that conveyed by our version: '*the trial*,' or *proof*,‡ '*of your faith*'—that is, the process itself of testing.§

Now, this in the case of faith is assumed to be '*much more precious*' than in the case of gold—a far nobler and more momentous thing, and looking to far costlier issues; or again, according to the construction preferred by many,‖ more precious than gold itself; just as Moses 'esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt.'** The most prized of all the metals from the mines of earth is still but a perishable commodity. As it does not make a man rich toward God, so in itself it is a frail possession, liable to loss or decay, and at the best it cannot 'endure unto everlasting life.'††

'*Though it be tried with fire*,' adds Peter. If you set this

which an Apostle would be more likely to assume at once, and in passing, than formally to represent it as a truth awaiting discovery in the day of the Lord. On the other hand, Steiger objects that while *εὑρίσκομαι* (*to be found*) often takes a participle or an adjective for its predicate, (Matt. 1 : 18, etc.,) it is never so construed in the New Testament at least, with *εἰς*, (*unto.*) But he fails in his attempt to show that Rom. 7 : 10 is not such an example. No doubt *αὕτη* there represents, as he says, the previous *ἐντολή*; but for that very reason it belongs to the subject, still leaving *εὑρέθη* in immediate connection—or *οὖσα* at most understood—with *εἰς θάνατον*. In both cases the exegesis rests on the common force of *εἰς*, as marking the tendency and issue.

* Tholuck at Rom. 15 : 4, Huther, Peile, Robinson, etc. Comp. *δοκιμή* in 2 Cor. 2 : 9, etc.

† Tyndale, Estius, Kuinöl, Pott, Meyer, De Wette, Alford, and many others.

‡ This would better represent the original ambiguity.

§ Compare the *δοκιμασία* of Heb. 3 : 9, as read by Lachmann and Tischendorf.

‖ As the old English versions, most of the modern foreign authorities, and Alford. For examples of the other construction, (*comparatio compendiaria*,) see Matt. 5 : 20, and John 5 : 36. The connection with *πειρασμοῖς*, and the prominence of the same idea in both members of the comparison, *τὸ δοκίμιον... δοκιμαζομένου*, lead me rather to prefer it in the present instance.

** Hebrews 11 : 26. †† John 6 : 27.

clause over against the phrase, '*much more precious*,' then it becomes parallel to that expression in the Psalm, (19 : 10 ; comp. 119 : 127,) 'more to be desired than gold, *yea than much fine*'—*refined*—'*gold*.' Or, if you regarded it as opposed to the words, '*that perisheth*,' the idea would be this : 'The nature of gold as a perishable thing, is not changed in the furnace. Take what pains with it you will, still it perisheth.' But in my opinion the structure of the original* cannot well be reconciled with either of these interpretations. The latter opposition, indeed, I take to be obviously the true one ; but the translation needs to be amended from '*though it be tried*' to '*yet is tried*,' or *proved*, '*by fire*.' And the explanation suggested by this is the following : The thing that a man most values, gold—perishable substance though it be—he will *yet*, for the sake of an important end, commit even to the ordeal of fire. Just so God deals with faith. The fining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold ; but the Lord—when He sits as a Refiner—trieth the hearts, that He may purely purge away their dross.† However hot the furnace, not a particle of heaven's pure ore—the faith of God's elect—shall perish there. Only the base alloys of earth must be consumed.

For you will now, in the last place, mark the end that God has in view in all these severities toward His children : '*That the proof of your faith*, being *much more precious than of gold that perisheth, yet is proved by fire, may be found*'—blessed discovery at last of the divine purpose in all the previous harsh processes !—'*may be found*'—nothing of it lost—'*unto praise and honor and glory*‡ *at the revelation of Jesus Christ*.' The Apostle writes as if no accumulation of words, however expressive, could fitly describe the purity and brightness of the crown which shall rest on the head of every saint, while the crowns of all saints shall but reflect the unveiled glory of their one Lord. He had already spoken of the final and perfect salvation as 'ready to be revealed in the last time.' Now

* I refer to the particle δέ and the present participle δοκιμαζομένου.

† Prov. 17 : 3 ; Is. 1 : 25 ; Mal. 3 : 3.

‡ Or as Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford read, *praise and glory and honor*. (Sin. A, B, C.)

he reminds his brethren that that should not be, till the Saviour Himself is revealed.

Such, brethren, were the joys and such the sorrows of these ancient servants of our Lord. Are we, their professed followers, heirs in any measure of their mingled experience? Do our hearts ever swell with love to the yet unseen person of Jesus Christ? Do our faith and hope in Him 'put gladness' there, more than in the time that this world's corn and wine increase?* Then let us beware of fainting or murmuring, if there is appointed to us a share also in their filial chastisement. 'For what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not?'† Sooner or later all these children and heirs have occasion to say, not only with acquiescence but with fervent gratitude: 'Thou, O God, hast proved us: Thou hast tried us, as silver is tried.'‡ And now we have seen in what it all ends—'*praise and honor and glory*'—in the presence of God and the angels of God—'*at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*' For as in the beginning, so now, and evermore, till the heavens open and show Him to us as He is, *that* is the goal of all true Christian faith, and hope, and joy. And if even such faint glimpses of His beauty as we now have through the veil of the word and sacrament are found so precious, what, oh! what shall the rapture be of beholding Him face to face!

* Psalm 4 : 7. † Hebrews 12 : 7. ‡ Psalm 66 : 10.

Lecture V.

1 *Peter* 1 : 10–12.

'Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that preached the Gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desired to look into.'

In these verses the writer confirms what he had been saying respecting the greatness and the certainty of the salvation of Christ, by a reference to the profound interest taken in whatever pertains to that subject by all wise and holy beings. '*Concerning** *which salvation*,' he says, '*prophets*'†—prophets themselves; prophets generally, and as a class—'*diligently*‡ *inquired and searched*.' They were not mere passive, unconcerned mediums for the transmission of the divine oracles. Their own souls were stirred by the grandeur and the mystery of the theme. That theme was '*salvation*'—salvation in its last and fullest development, or, as it is here described from the principle that reigns in all its methods and results, '*the grace for you*'§—appointed, reserved for you; you of this later dispensation; you, in whatever remote, heathen lands you sojourn; you, Gentiles, as well as Jews.

* περί—and so in the last clause.

† Without the article; as in v. 12, *angels*.

‡ The emphasis is common to both verbs, (of which the latter, ἐξερευνάω, is nowhere else found in the New Testament.) At the same time, the main thought is not this emphasis, but the fact itself, so emphasized.

§ τῆς εἰς ὑμᾶς χάριτος. Comp. τὰ εἰς Χριστὸν παθήματα, v. 11.

Concerning this grace it was that the prophets '*prophesied*.' To do so was not, indeed, their only function. Coming forth from the presence of God, in times often of national degeneracy or of public trial, they reasserted, expounded, and applied the divine law. They rebuked with authority alike the rulers and the people. They denounced judgments on the impenitent, while they also cheered and strengthened the hearts of faithful mourners by messages of deliverance and enlargement. But ever and anon the voice of instruction—of reproof, of warning—of encouragement—would suddenly tremble with tenderness or swell into rapture, in the anticipation of scenes far transcending the measure of 'the times then present.'* For theirs was not a ministry of merely human wisdom, fidelity, and love. 'Holy men of God spake borne along by the Holy Ghost'†—by '*the Spirit of Christ in them*.'‡ The very same Spirit which descended at the Jordan on the Man Christ Jesus, and now dwells in Him as the Head of His body, the Church, breathed also on these His ancient forerunners; and then, as now, 'the testimony of Jesus was the spirit of prophecy.'§ From whatever occasion of immediate interest that prophetic spirit took its flight, it soared till in the far future it saw the day of Christ—saw the Sun of Righteousness laboring through some dread eclipse, and then pouring the blaze of an unclouded meridian on a regenerated world. 'To Him,' as our Apostle in like manner declared on a memorable occasion, 'give all the prophets witness.'‖ From the beginning—from that first hour of hope for guilty man—which foretold the bruising of our Deliverer's heel, and of the head of His foe—** all on through the dim, weary ages of expectancy and preparation, the Spirit of God—of the eternal Son—of the yet unborn Messiah, brooded anew over the moral chaos, and 'in many parts and in many ways'—'here a little, and there a little;'†† by types, and symbols, and the rapt utterances of seers, growing ever clearer as the fulness of the time drew nigh, '*was*' still '*showing* and *testifying beforehand*‡‡ *the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow*.'

* Heb. 9 : 9. † 2 Peter 1 : 21, (*φερόμενοι*.) ‡ *τὸ ἐν αὐτοῖς Πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ*.
§ Rev. 19 : 10. ‖ Acts 10 : 43. ** Gen. 3 : 15.
†† Heb. 1 : 1, (*πολυμέρως καὶ πολυτρόπως*;) Is. 28 : 10.
‡‡ *ἐδήλου προμαρτυρόμενον*. The latter word is found nowhere else; and both

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'*The sufferings of Christ*,' literally, *the sufferings for Christ*, appointed for Christ,* are His humiliations in the flesh below the angels, and His life and death under the curse. The phrase has, indeed, been sometimes explained as denoting the sufferings endured by believers *in reference to—on account of*—Christ.† The writer's immediate object, it is said, was to comfort his brethren under their own present sorrows; besides that it is implied in the very structure of the passage that 'the prophecy of the prophets (v. 10) and the testimony of the Spirit of Christ refer to the same thing.'‡ But the force of these arguments disappears when we reflect, that the personal Christ, as crucified and glorified, is Himself the Fountain of '*grace*' and the Author of '*salvation*' to His people; that the prophets would naturally expect, what is actually realized in the experience of the Church, that Messiah's friends would share alike in His humiliation and His triumph;§ and that the interposition, between Christ's cross and His crown, of these Gentile times—of privilege, indeed, but also—of mourning and fasting during the Lord's temporary absence, is the very 'mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations.'‖

In the same way, '*the glory that should follow*' is not to be understood of what awaits the suffering saints in the world to come, except as that is involved in, and secured by, the glory of Christ. That glory, however, is manifold, like His sufferings; and, accordingly, the expression here properly is, not

words are construed as above—that is, as standing in the closest mutual relation and as having '*the sufferings*,' etc., for their common object—by the Dutch version and Huther. The Syriac also may be understood in nearly the same way, and Scholefield compares Acts 28 : 23, ἐξετίθετο διαμαρτυρόμενος. For other constructions see p. 48, §.

* τα εἰς Χριστὸν παθήματα. See p. 49, note ††.

† Clericus, Brown, Huther, and one or two others.

‡ Brown—who, as an alternative, is willing to accept of Pott's suggestion: sufferings endured by the Jewish people before the times of Messiah—*until Christ*. But this is still less satisfactory; nor is Gal. 3 : 24, to which Brown appeals, a good example of this very questionable construction of εἰς in the sense of *until*, with a proper name.

§ Matt. 10 : 24, 25; Acts 9 : 4, 5; Phil. 3 : 10; Col. 1 : 24; 2 Tim. 2 : 11, 12, etc. Calvin's modification of the common view may, therefore, be admitted: 'Christum a suo corpore non separat—he does not separate Christ from His body.'

‖ Matt. 9 : 15; Col. 1 : 26; etc.

'*the glory*,' but '*the glories after these*,'* that is, after the sufferings. There is the glory of the resurrection—the glory of the ascension—the glory of the present session at the right hand of God—the glory of the second advent, and the new creation, and Israel restored, and the Church perfected, and the everlasting kingdom. On the head of Him, whose 'name is called The Word of God,' John in Patmos saw 'many crowns;'† and ages before that, the same spectacle had blessed the visions of prophets. As the glories must necessarily be preceded by the sufferings, so the sufferings were as certainly to be followed by the glories. When our risen Lord, therefore, sought to remove from the minds and hearts of His disciples the perplexity and despondency occasioned by His death, the method He took was to show them the inseparable connection between these two stages in His career —in other words, that it was necessary for the Messiah to 'suffer,' and by that path to 'enter into His glory.' But for this demonstration no new revelation was required, but only a right apprehension of the old. 'Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.'‡

That the prophetic testimony reached onward to the final consummation, in 'the restitution of all things' at the return of Jesus Christ from heaven, is plainly asserted by our Apostle in his second recorded discourse after Pentecost.§ And that it also embraced the great already accomplished facts of the evangelical history, is still further evident from the statement in the 12th verse, that the ancient prophets '*ministered*'—*used to minister—were ministering*‖ from age to age, as their one grand, continuous theme—'*the things*'—*those things, the very things***—'*which now*,' says Peter, or since the coming in of the present dispensation, '*were reported*†† *unto you by those who preached the Gospel*'—proclaimed the glad tidings‡‡—'*unto you with the Holy Spirit*'—or, *in* §§ the Holy Spirit, as

* τὰς μετὰ ταῦτα δόξας. † Rev. 19 : 12. ‡ Luke 24 : 26, 27.
§ Acts 3 : 20, 21. ‖ διηκόνουν. ** αὐτά. †† ἀνηγγέλη.
‡‡ εὐαγγελισαμένων. §§ ἐν—which, however, is cancelled by Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford, (A, B.)

the Divine element, so to speak, of their activity—'*sent* from heaven.*'

The writer, we cannot doubt, recalled the wonder of Pentecost. Formerly that same spirit had been in the prophets. But, as between His presence and operation then, and His presence and operation now, there existed something of the same difference in point of clearness, and fulness, and permanence, as between the old transient theophanies and the incarnation. At the baptism of our Lord the Heavenly Dove not only 'descended from heaven,' but 'abode upon Him,' as having at last found the Man on whom it could rest. And so the promise to the disciples was of 'another Comforter,' who should 'abide with them for ever . . . dwelling with them, and being in them,' not as a wayfarer, tarrying for a night, but as a constant Guest—one of the household—the very life of their life. When that promise came to be fulfilled, its rich significance was symbolized by 'the sound as of a rushing mighty wind *filling all the house* where they were sitting,' and by the lambent fire which '*sat* upon each of them.'† And then the promise and the symbol were straightway justified by the results which followed both in the preaching and the hearing of the Gospel.

From the tone of this allusion to those who first preached it in Asia Minor, especially when taken in connection with the history of the Acts, we might perhaps safely infer that the writer himself was not of the number.‡ But it is more important for us to notice again before proceeding the variety of phrase, in which the main subject of the prophetic ministry is here described. That was nothing less than the great '*salvation*' in which the Christian Church now exults. It was '*the grace*' reserved for the latter days. It was '*the sufferings*' and *the after glories* to which Messiah was appointed, as the means whereby the salvation was to be wrought out, and the marvellous grace of God in that salvation was to be illustrated. It was, in fact, says Peter, the

* Nowhere else, out of more than 130 instances, does the English version add *down* to the meaning of *ἀποστέλλω*.

† John 1 : 32 ; 14 : 16, 17 ; Acts 2 : 2, 3.

‡ Comp. 2 Peter 3 : 2.

identical subject, that now constitutes the burden of the evangelical message.

You may well inquire: And whence had these men this wisdom?* Whence this astonishing harmony between the prophets of the old covenant and the apostles of the new? Must we ascribe it to the sagacity with which the former scanned the tendencies of their own times, and were thus enabled to anticipate the future? The monstrous absurdity of such a theory is at once apparent from the length of time that intervened, and the nature of the events themselves so anticipated. What perceptible, what conceivable tendency was there in human affairs toward the incarnation of the Son of God, and His resurrection from the dead—the two facts on which every thing else depended? The text, you perceive, gives a far simpler and more satisfactory explanation. What the Apostles preached was shown and testified beforehand by the prophets, because one and the same Spirit of Christ was present with both. 'It is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost,'† said our Lord to the former. It was equally true of the latter.

And this predominance of the Divine in their case also is evinced moreover by the statement, that '*unto them it was revealed*'—so much at least being made clear to their consciousness—'*that not unto themselves, but unto us*'‡—us of the new economy; us who live so long after their decease—'*they were ministering*' these mysteries of God. This certainly does not mean, that the prophets and their godly contemporaries had neither part nor lot in the Gospel salvation. Nor is it a formal denial that that salvation was exclusively for them; as if it were said: *not to themselves alone, but to us also.* Nor is it even spoken by way merely of contrasting their inferior light and privilege with ours: *not so much to themselves, as to us.* What was revealed to the prophets was rather this, that the realization of their predictions respecting the Messiah, His sufferings and His glories—the free admis-

* Matthew 13 : 54. † Mark 13 : 11.

‡ Griesbach, Scholz, Lachmann, Alford read ὑμῖν, (*unto you*; Sin. A, C, G.)

sion to that 'feast of fat things,'* which already by their hands the Lord of hosts was preparing in His holy mountain —was not to be looked for in their day, nor yet to be confined to the natural Israel. It was to be the joy of other times and of all people—yea, as the event has proved, of *us*, 'upon whom the ends of the world are come.'†

Some‡ have supposed that this partial revelation was the consequence and reward of the investigations previously mentioned: 'They searched, and so it was revealed to them, etc.' But so much as that revelation amounted to seems often to stand out on the very face of the prophecies themselves,§ and can scarcely be what engaged these earnest inquiries. Besides, it is here quite plainly intimated, that the inquiries both took a wider range, and had also a more definite scope. And therefore, as I understand the mutual relation of the verses before us, the researches of the prophets did not issue in the knowledge, that what they foretold concerned more directly some future age; but rather, the knowledge of that fact helped to stimulate their researches. Here was an illustration at once of their humility and their magnanimity. They did not, like the elder brother in the parable, sullenly turn aside from festivities, in which they themselves might be thought to have but an inferior or secondary interest. 'Blessed are your eyes,' said Christ to His disciples, 'for they see: and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men longed to see the things which ye see, and saw them not; and to hear the things which ye hear, and heard them not.'‖ And not only so; they understood but imperfectly their own predictions. They lacked the clearness and satisfaction of the fulfilment. They 'saw through a glass, darkly.'** But what they were enabled even thus to descry of the great salvation—the solemn preparations, and the final triumph—sufficed to fill them with an exceeding joy. They all lived and 'died in faith, not having

* Isaiah 25 : 6. † 1 Cor. 10 : 11. ‡ Bengel, Steiger, etc.
§ Isaiah 6 : 11–13; Dan. 10 : 1, 14; 12 : 9–13; Hos. 3 : 4, 5, etc.
‖ Matt. 13 : 16, 17, (*ἐπεθύμησαν ἰδεῖν ἃ βλέπετε, καὶ οὐκ εἶδον· κτλ.*)
** 1 Corinthians 13 : 12.

received the promises' in their accomplishment, 'but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them.'* In their several measures, like faithful Abraham, they 'exulted to see Messiah's day; and they saw it, and were glad.'† The very darkness that intervened—the mists that veiled its dawning—the manifold uncertainties still resting on the scene, amid the dazzling splendors of its noon-tide glory—all served but to deepen their curiosity, and hold their wistful, wondering gaze. '*Concerning which salvation prophets diligently inquired and searched.*' Nothing pertaining to it—its provisions, its subjects, its nature or extent—was to them a matter of indifference. In the language of one of them, they were 'astonished at the vision,' even where they least comprehended its precise import.‡

And of course, such being their earnest interest in the whole subject, they could not possibly be careless as to the time of the realization. They knew, indeed, that there was to be some considerable delay. But how protracted that delay should be—at what point in the future the new world would arise—and what, in detail, were the peculiar arrangements and adjustments of the Messianic era;§ these were questions yet unresolved, and on them they would fain have had more light. This I suppose to be what is meant, when to the general statement of the 10th verse, '*Concerning which salvation prophets diligently inquired and searched,*' it is added in the 11th, '*searching for*‖ *what, or what manner of time*'—

* Hebrews 11 : 13. † John 8 : 56, (ἠγαλλιάσατο.) ‡ Daniel 8 : 27.

§ 1. Our version, disregarding the εἰς, makes καιρόν the object of ἐδήλου. But this, though acquiesced in by several, 'cannot,' says Scholefield, 'be right.' Our translators seem to have been reconciled to it by the strong preference, which Beza avows for what he, and Leusden after him, erroneously represent as the Syriac construction. 2. Luther and many others explain thus: '*to what . . . the Spirit . . . pointed, referred.*' But the Greek verb never means this. 3. ἐδήλου has been taken as absolute, or with its object supplied from the context. 4. τὰ παθήματα κτλ. has been made the immediate object, the participle προμαρτυρόμενον being construed as an adjective—or with ἐν αὐτοῖς—or absolutely.

‖ Entirely out of the question (though Barnes thinks that, 'so far as the Greek is concerned,' it might be allowed) is Macknight's supplement of λαόν to τίνα, *what people.* Nor is the interpretation which Barnes adopts, *unto whom, what person,* (and so Burton, Sharpe, Peile,) much helped by Peile's reference to the perplexity of an Ethiopian, Acts 8 : 34.

that is, for what time* or what sort of time—'*the Spirit of Christ in them was showing* and *testifying beforehand the sufferings* appointed *for Christ, and the glories after these.*' The very cry that now bursts from souls beneath the altar, 'How long, O Lord?' sounded amidst the shadows of the old economy.† And, remembering the great difficulty experienced by the Apostles themselves, in their attempts to conceive aright of the relations of that dispensation of which at last they were the immediate heralds, we cannot wonder that the ancient prophets should have been still more perplexed in their efforts to trace its characteristic features. Messiah's sufferings and subsequent glories—that He should be a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and yet a prosperous King—that He should descend into death, and then prolong His days—bear the sin of many, and divide the spoil with the strong—that He should be despised and rejected of men, and that to Him should be the gathering of the peoples—forsaken of God, and God's Elect, in whom His soul delighteth—all this was made known with a distinctness and variety of iteration, that left no room for doubt as to either of the two classes of facts.‡ But to reconcile the two—to detect their indissoluble, though dimly revealed, connections—to follow the footsteps of Israel's great Champion, from his birth of the Virgin, through the valley of His humiliation and the gates of Hades, onward to the right hand of God, and the throne of His father David, and the dominion of all the earth—this again was a problem, which in regard merely to the determination of the times and the seasons involved in it, their limitations and properties, challenged and received the devout and patient study of the prophets.§

Nor of them alone. The text points us to other students,

* Bengel: '*Quod* innuit tempus per se, quasi dicas *æram* suis numeris notatam: *quale* dicit tempus ex eventibus variis noscendum. Dan. 9 : 2.' '*What* denotes simply the time, as if you should mention an era by its numerical notation; *what manner of* marks the time as distinguishable from its various events.'

† Rev. 6 : 9, 10; Ps. 90 : 13; 94 : 3; Is. 6 : 11, etc.

‡ Gen. 49 : 10 (עַמִּים); Ps. 22 : 1; Is. 42 : 1; 53 : 3, 9, 10, 12; Jer. 23 : 5.

§ Altogether unwarranted is De Wette's restriction of what is here said of the prophets to the case of Daniel, (9 : 2, 22–27.)

standing, as it were, beside or close behind* the prophets, and not less intent than they. '*Which things the angels desire to look into*;' or, '*into which things*'—to wit, the things reported unto you by the gospel preachers; Christ's sufferings and glories; and these as exhibiting the grace of God, as securing the salvation of the Church, as reaching in their developments and influences through the advancing ages to 'the dispensation of the fulness of times'†—'*into which things angels*'‡—even angels, those strong, pure, wise, ever-living spirits, familiar as they are with heaven's beauties and grandeurs—'*long to gaze*.'§ Yes, here—at Bethlehem, in Gethsemane, on Calvary, in the garden-sepulchre, from the intercessions of our ascended High-Priest, the upper room at Jerusalem, and the 'rivers of living water'‖ flowing thence to the uttermost ends of the earth, and into the depths of eternity, further than even their bright eyes can see—in a word, in Christ and the Church, they learn more of God, and of God's ways, than in all the universe besides.**

We have no good English equivalent for the expression which we here render *to look* or *gaze*. Its most frequent use in Scripture is to describe, according to what is no doubt the original force of the word, the *bending* or *stooping* of the disciples as they looked into the tomb after the resurrection of their Lord.†† But we are scarcely on that account authorized to say, with many expositors,‡‡ that in the case before us there is an allusion to the supposed similar posture of the cherubim over the mercy-seat. It is not at all certain that such was their posture, or even that the cherubim represented angels.§§ What is, however, plainly implied in the whole phrase is the

* Bengel requires us to note the *παρά* in *παρακύψαι* as implying that we are the parties most nearly concerned, and that the angels are only bystanders and onlookers, (and so Wiesinger.) But this is to rest more on the preposition than the usage warrants.

† Ephesians 1 : 10 ‡ Without the article, as in v. 10, *prophets*.

§ *ἐπιθυμοῦσιν. παρακύψαι.* ‖ John 7 : 38. ** Ephesians 3 : 10.

†† Luke 24 : 12; John 20 : 5, 11. The only other instance in the New Testament is James 1 : 25.

‡‡ After Beza.

§§ If the living creatures of Rev. 4 : 7, 8 were cherubic, then Rev. 5 : 8, 9 would show that the cherubim represented redeemed men.

earnestness of angelic contemplation, and the depth of angelic interest in the processes and issues of the mediatorial work. And to this, Scripture bears frequent and ample testimony.

But another idea equally apparent is, the incompleteness of the angelic knowledge on these subjects. '*Into which things angels long to gaze.*' In the school of Christ, which is His Church, they are not only 'ministering spirits,'* but learners also. They too confess the greatness of 'the mystery of godliness.'† They find depths in it which they cannot fathom—into which they can not look. Many ages since, their voices were heard by the prophet of the captivity, crying: 'How long? . . . . How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?'‡ And even now, as they meditate on the sufferings and the glories of Christ, and behold the mingled darkness and brightness of that path of life along which He leads His people, and mark the prosperity of the wicked, and the workings of the apostasy, and the desolations of Zion, and the gross darkness still covering the earth, they say with us, but with a humility profounder far than ours, 'We know in part,'§ and they await the day of final revelation.‖

In conclusion, let me, 1, caution you, brethren, against the ignorant frivolity which, professing to reverence the Scriptures of the New Testament, speaks slightingly of those of the Old. As well may you sever the light of the meridian from its dawn; or, cutting a sunbeam in two, retain only the nearer portion. The New Testament itself refuses to accept any such partial and exclusive homage. Its very highest glory is, that from first to last it is but the unfolding of the law and the prophets. '*The Spirit of Christ*' was '*in them*,' and spake by them.**

2. Another popular conceit of our day is, that there is but little use in studying the prophetic word of God, or, indeed—

* Hebrews 1 : 14.
† 1 Timothy 3 : 16, (ὁμολογουμένως.)
‡ Daniel 8 : 13; 12 : 6.
§ 1 Corinthians 13 : 9.
‖ Wiesinger suggests that the aorist form (παρακύψαι) may impart such an insight, as should lay open the mystery *once for all.*
** See pp. 426–432.

to judge by the practice of the great majority even of Christian professors—the Bible at all ; at least, beyond what lies on the surface, or what children are taught in Sabbath-schools. This, you perceive, was not the temper of the prophets : They '*diligently inquired and searched*.' It is not the temper of angels : Into these things '*angels long to gaze*.'

3. Again, if such be the interest felt by all that is wisest and holiest in earth and heaven, in whatever concerns the redemption of man, alas for those to whom this great salvation itself is offered, and who yet choose to live and die in the neglect of it!

4. And, finally, let the afflicted children of God take comfort from the consideration of what was foretold, and has been fulfilled, in regard to God's own Well-Beloved, the Author and Finisher of their faith, to whose image it is God's purpose, and the dearest ambition of their hearts, that they shall be in all things conformed. Grudge not, then, brethren, to sit down beside the Man of Sorrows, and to mingle your tears with His. So shall you hereafter 'sit with Him in His throne.' Refuse not 'the fellowship of His sufferings.' What though you should even be 'made conformable unto His death'?* Remember only that for Him, as for you, the rule of the household was : Suffering, and, after that, glory.

* Rev. 3 : 21 ; Phil. 3 : 10.

Lecture VI.

1 *PETER* 1 : 13–16.

'WHEREFORE gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: but as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.'

WE here enter on the main division of the Epistle, extending to the 9th verse of the 5th chapter, and consisting chiefly of apostolic counsel and exhortation. Of the several sections into which it has been subdivided the first may be said to reach as far as the 10th verse of the 2d chapter; and in it Peter summons his brethren to hope, holiness, godly fear, brotherly love, and continual growth in grace, as the great leading duties of every Christian, as such. For in the case of each of these duties in succession it will be found, that the motive by which it is enforced is drawn directly from the nature of the Christian's calling and privilege, as described in the previous part of this chapter. There is, indeed, as was formerly observed,* no peculiarity more marked in the New Testament style of teaching morals than this, that everywhere it first assumes the necessity of a new spiritual state and character, before any man can render the new obedience required, and then from that gracious change itself it expects him to derive the strength and impulse needed for running the race that is set before him.

Of this evangelical characteristic we have striking examples throughout the present context. Mark, for instance, the way in which the writer here makes the transition to his practical

* Page 24.

inculcations. '*Wherefore*,' says he—and the reference need not be confined to any particular part of what precedes, but to all that had been said respecting the doings and purposes of the Divine mercy in the salvation of the sojourners, no less than to the estimation in which that salvation was held by prophets and angels—'These things being so, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?'* But let us consider the more immediate special inference of v. 13.

'*Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*' The main stress is to be laid on the last clause, the other two clauses rather suggesting the necessary preparation; thus: *Wherefore girding up*—or, *having girt up—the loins of your mind, being sober, hope perfectly*—so it reads in our English margin—*for the grace—have your hope perfectly turned toward,* and *set on, the grace—coming to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*†

Christians, then, are to be a hopeful people. Not only have they a right to be so, but the Apostle—the Apostle of hope, as Peter has been called—enforces it upon them as an indispensable obligation. He had given thanks to God, you remember, first of all, that in His great mercy He had begotten them again to a living hope; and now the first of all the duties enjoined is, that they live in the full enjoyment of that hope. The object of it had already been variously described, as 'an inheritance reserved in the heavens'—as 'salvation ready to be revealed in the last time'—as 'praise and honor and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ.' Here it takes the name of its source—that Divine attribute, which shall still be recognized and celebrated by the redeemed before the throne, as 'reigning unto eternal life.'‡ What believers are directed to hope for is '*grace*,' and that not in those first measures of it, which are the earnest of the inheritance, nor in such increased supplies of it as may be vouchsafed during the remainder

* 2 Peter 3 : 11.

† *Διὸ ἀναζωσάμενοι τὰς ὀσφύας τῆς διανοίας ὑμῶν, νήφοντες, τελείως ἐλπίσατε ἐπὶ τὴν φερομένην ὑμῖν χάριν κτλ.*

‡ Rom. 5 : 21.

of their pilgrimage, or in a dying hour, or even in the intermediate state; but grace, as presupposing all these, in its fulness and consummation. For this they look only at that period, which the writer with a fond repetition loves ever to designate as the time of '*the revelation of Jesus Christ.*'

Of that great future crisis in the Church's history we, brethren, have been wont to think as of something almost foreign to the interests and the duties of the present life. Even when there is no disposition to question the truth and certainty of it, we are yet apt to feel that at any rate we can have as little immediate concern with what is so remote and dim, as with the ages beyond the flood, or the regions beyond the fixed stars. But the Apostles, it must needs be confessed, felt otherwise eighteen hundred years ago. Such was the vivid earnestness of their faith and desire in regard to this event, that, knowing not the day and hour of its occurrence, they were fain to anticipate it as just at hand. The wheels of Divine providence, they did know, were already working toward this end; and so Peter speaks of the crowning grace to be then received, not as what *should be brought* to them some time or other, but as what was at that very time *a-bringing*. It was actually on the way, and might arrive at any moment.

Ever thinking thus in regard to the coming 'manifestations of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ,' the primitive Christians, loving their Lord, and therefore loving His appearing, could not but find their hearts drawn forth to it, as to that which was preëminently their 'blessed hope.'* And to this their inspired teachers seem to have been daily pointing them. '*Hope to the end*,' says our text—or, as more correctly in the margin, *hope perfectly*†—for that which God has in store for His children, (vs. 4, 5;) that for which ye

* Tit. 2 : 13, (ἐπιφάνειαν τῆς δόξης.)

† There is no example of τελείως (which is not found elsewhere in the New Testament)=μέχρι τέλους, (Heb. 3 : 6,) or εἰς τέλος, (Matt. 10 : 22—which Grotius here cites.) Our translators put Beza's latest interpretation, *ad finem usque*, into their text, and retained in the margin his older and better *integre*. The Syriac construction of τηλείως with νήφοντες is adopted by Œcumenius and a very few moderns.

were begotten again, (v. 3 ;) that for which all present trials are now preparing you, (v. 7 ;) to wit, the joy of the Saviour's second advent. Only let your hope of that be what it ought, and every thing else will follow.

But wherein, it may be asked, does this perfection of hope consist? Observe what the Apostle specifies as its prerequisites: '*Having girt up* the loins of your mind, being sober.*' The long, loose garments of the eastern world needed the restraint of the girdle, when any labor, or travel, or conflict was to be undertaken, and the body itself was in the same way strengthened for the effort. Thus the children of Israel, on the night of the Exodus, were to eat the first passover in haste, with girded loins. And so, when Elijah would run before Ahab in that storm of wind and rain, to the entrance of Jezreel, he first 'girded up his loins.' Equally essential was the girdle as a part of the priest's dress ; and David, the man of war, again and again praises God for having girded him with strength unto the battle.† When Christians, therefore, were spoken of as pilgrims to the heavenly land, or as servants waiting for their Lord, and meanwhile doing His work, or as a royal priesthood, or as the soldiers of Christ summoned to the good fight of faith, there was no precept more natural or more readily intelligible than that, which required them to gird up the loins of their mind.‡

This is not to be understood as directed exclusively against the sins of uncleanness, but rather as a general caution against that dissipation of the thoughts and affections on present interests and indulgences of whatever kind, that is plainly incompatible with a true religious life, and, in particular, with an earnest anticipation of future blessedness—the resolute pressing of the whole united soul toward the Christian goal. If, brethren, we would keep our garments undefiled—if we desire to be always ready for every good word and work—if our daily aim is to be found thus of our Lord in peace—and if, in order to this, we must live habitually under the light and influence of the one hope of our calling—then equally neces-

* *ἀναζωσάμενοι*—in the New Testament found only here.
† Ex. 12 : 11 ; 28 : 4 ; 1 Kings 18 : 46 ; Ps. 18 : 32, 39.
‡ Luke 12 : 35 ; Eph. 6 : 14.

sary is it, as a preliminary to all the rest, that we restrain the natural wanderings of the heart after the things of time and sense, even such of them as are in themselves innocent and desirable.

Of this inward self-control the immediate result and manifestation is an habitual temper of *sobriety*, which our Apostle again and again enjoins on his brethren, (4 : 7 ; 5 : 8,) and which is mentioned here as another condition of a perfect hope : '*being sober*.' The word is twice* in our version rendered '*to watch*,' and the same idea is preferred by many in the case before us. But the other is everywhere the proper sense. As employed by the New Testament writers, the expression is just a repetition of our Lord's own solemn caution to His disciples : 'Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.'† But, of course—and so much, indeed, is implied in that original warning—there is the closest affinity between such a Christian temperance of character—moderation in all worldly relations and pursuits and enjoyments—and the spirit of a wary and vigilant circumspection.

And now, says the Apostle, '*having girt up the loins of your mind, being sober*'—maintaining thus a constant guard against the natural looseness and waywardness of your own hearts, as well as against the entanglements and distractions of the things that are seen and temporal—you will be prepared for the exercises and enjoyments of your higher life. Look upward. Look forward. Hope—'*perfectly hope*'—for that which your returning Saviour holds for you in His hand. Thus hoping, your hope will be without doubts or misgivings—an abounding hope—'sure and steadfast'—as resting on the finished work of Christ, and the immutable promise of God.‡ It will be a patient, enduring, yea, rejoicing, hope ; for what are all these light and momentary afflictions, compared with the 'far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory'?§ And, finally, it

* 1 Peter 4 : 7 ; 2 Timothy 4 : 5.

† Luke 21 : 34. Comp. p. 277, and *Lect on Thess.* pp. 288, etc.

‡ Rom. 15 : 13 ; Heb. 6 : 11, 18, 19.

§ Rom. 5 : 2 ; 8 : 25 ; 12 : 12 ; 2 Cor. 4 : 17 ; 1 Thess. 1 : 3 ; Heb. 3 : 6.

will be a purifying, assimilating hope, changing you, even while you gaze, 'into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.'*

In which last thought we might find a point of transition to what follows in the next three verses, which treat of the obligation, the measure, and the motives, of Christian holiness. But the connection, so far as any connection was intended,† may better be regarded as one of reciprocal influence. As the Christian hope has in it a sanctifying power, so it is not less true that holiness tends to brighten and strengthen hope. We need not, however, as some have done, make the 14th verse, or even the first clause of it,‡ grammatically dependent on the 13th. Still less should the 14th verse be treated by itself as containing a separate, complete charge, to be read thus: *Do not fashion yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance.*§ According to what I consider the true construction, the whole of the 14th verse is subsidiary to the great precept of the 15th, and may be said to determine negatively, as the latter verse does positively, the model according to which believers are to proceed in 'perfecting holiness.'‖ Closely rendered, the two verses might take this form: '*As children of obedience, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts in your ignorance, but according to the Holy One who called you, be ye yourselves also holy in all your walk.*'

And here again, you will observe, the appeal grounds itself on the new spiritual relations and qualities of the sojourners. Formerly they too had been numbered with 'the children of disobedience.'** Disobedience to the divine truth and law had been their most prominent constitutional characteristic—pervading, like a family feature, the whole aspect of their moral being.†† But that was in the times of their '*ignorance*'—ignorance of all that it most concerns man to know—when, like

* 2 Cor. 3 : 18; John 3 : 3.

† Some editors, as Bengel and Trollope, begin a new paragraph with v. 14.

‡ So the Syriac, Luther, and a few others.

§ The Syriac, Luther, the Dutch, Bengel, MacKnight, Pott, and many others.

‖ 2 Cor. 7 : 1. ** Eph. 2 : 2; 5 : 6.

†† According to the force of that common Hebrew idiom. Comp. Eph. 2 : 2; 1 Thess. 5 : 5; 2 Thess. 2 : 3; etc.

other Gentiles, (for the expression is itself a strong presumption in favor of the Gentile origin of those here addressed,) they 'knew not God,'* His nature or His will. Cut off thus from the Fountain of living waters—the only Source of true blessedness—what else remained but to hew out broken cisterns for themselves? seeking such measure of transient, impure satisfaction as might be found in giving free scope to '*the lusts*' of their depraved nature—'fulfilling,' as Paul says, 'the desires of the flesh and of the mind.'†

Such had been their condition and character '*formerly*.'‡ But even then, while they were yet 'afar off,'§ the voice of God reached them, calling, effectually calling, them out of darkness into light—into the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord—yea, themselves also to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, and so to the hope of the children's inheritance, God's kingdom and glory.‖ Vast as was this change, however, in their relations and prospects, it implied one of no less importance 'in the spirit of their mind'**—in their moral tastes and tendencies. They were at the same time as effectually 'called unto holiness.'†† In becoming children of God, they became '*children of obedience*.'‡‡ They bore the lineaments of the new family to which they now belonged. Whereas their one aim in life had been 'to please themselves,' their daily study now was, 'how they ought to walk and please God.'§§ With great propriety and force does the Apostle, when about to exhort them to holiness, begin by reminding them of what they already are, not only by their own profession, but according to the Divine purpose itself in their calling and regeneration.

If, then, the inquiry be as to the ultimate end of that purpose in this respect, and the extent of the corresponding obligation, there is involved, first of all, an absolute and perpetual divorce from what they most loved and practised of

* 1 Cor. 1 : 21; 1 Thess. 4 : 5; etc. See *Lect. on Thess.* p. 447.
† Eph. 2 : 3; 4 : 17–19.
πρότερον—here, with the article, used adjectively.
§ Eph. 2 : 17. ‖ 1 Peter 2 : 9; 1 Cor. 1 : 9; Eph. 1 : 5; 1 Thess. 2 : 12.
** Eph. 4 : 23. †† 1 Thess. 4 : 7.
‡‡ *τέκνα ὑπακοῆς*. §§ Rom. 15 : 1; 1 Thess. 4 : 1.

old: '*not conforming yourselves to** *the former lusts in your ignorance.*' These lusts had been their masters once, and to the scheme or course of life which they prescribed a ready and eager obedience had been ever yielded. But it must be so no longer. Having escaped from the foul tyranny, the children of God must not allow themselves to be again brought into bondage. The law of sin, which is still in their members, is there only as a broken, dishonored, lawless, usurping power—one to which the inward man consents not, but rather wages with it a truceless war of extermination. This is that putting off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts—that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts—that crucifying the flesh with the affections and lusts—that cleansing ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit—which is everywhere in the New Testament enforced as an indispensable part of sanctification.†

And yet all this, as I said, is merely the negative side of the process. '*The former lusts in your ignorance*' are not your standard. '*But*,' adds Peter, '*according to the Holy One who called you*' ‡—in the day of your regeneration and conversion—'*be ye yourselves also holy in all* your *walk.*' In what God has done for you you will find a constraining motive to aim at being what He desires you to be; and the measure of that is to be found only in what God Himself is. Your holiness must, in so far as the limitations of the creature allow, accord with the Divine holiness. And think not that this will of God for your sanctification§ can safely be trifled with or evaded: '*Because it is written*'—was written again and again in the law of Moses,‖ and stands written,** as the declaration to all ages of what is expected and required of those whom the Most High at any time admits into covenant with Him—'*Be ye holy*'—or perhaps, '*Ye shall be holy*—

* *μὴ συσχηματιζόμενοι ταῖς κτλ.* The only other New Testament instance of this verb is Rom. 12 : 2, where see the common version.

† Rom. 7 : 15–23; Eph. 4 : 22; Titus 2 : 12; 2 Cor. 7 : 1.

‡ *κατὰ* (comp. 1 Peter 4 : 6; Rom. 15 : 5; Eph. 2 : 2, etc.) *τὸν καλέσαντα ὑμᾶς ἅγιον.*

§ 1 Thess. 4 : 3. ‖ Lev. 11 : 44; 19 : 2; 20 : 7. ** *γέγραπται.*

for I am holy.'* The reason is as cogent as the command is solemn. 'Can two walk together except they be agreed?'† What concord, then, can there be betwixt an unholy soul and the thrice holy God?

The holiness of God, says John Howe,‡ 'may be styled a transcendental attribute, that as it were runs through the rest, and casts a glory upon every one: 'tis an attribute of attributes. Those are fit predications, holy power, holy truth, holy love, etc. And so it is the very lustre and glory of His other perfections; He is glorious in holiness.' Or we may say, it is the essential light of the Divine nature, into whose composition enter the mingled rays of the other attributes, as justice, goodness, and truth. In that light 'is no darkness at all,'§ and it sheds a beauty, at once lovely and venerable, on all the thoughts and purposes, on all the works and ways, of God.

The requisition therefore is, that the holiness of the believer shall, both in its quality and its universality, be a reflection of that of 'the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy.'‖ Yes, according to that supreme example,** and after no inferior model, '*be ye yourselves also holy in all* your *walk*'††—in every movement of your heart and life—in secret, as well as before the public eye—in the family, as well as in church—in your secular affairs, whether of business or politics, no less than in the exercises of devotion.

Let us, then, in conclusion, try ourselves by these precepts of our Apostle. And what serious questions for this purpose are presented by every clause!

Thus, be our religious profession what it may, it may well be asked whether it could be said of us with any show of truth, that with girded loins and a sober mind we, as our primitive brethren were instructed, are 'both hoping and

* Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford read ἔσεσθε, *ye shall be*, (Sin. A, B, C,) and cancel εἰμί, *am*, (Sin. A, B.) Sin. also has διό, for διότι.

† Amos 3 : 3. ‡ *The Blessedness of the Righteous*, chap. v.

§ 1 John 1 : 5. ‖ Is. 57 : 15.

** Bengel: 'Summum exemplum.'

†† καὶ αὐτοὶ ἅγιοι ἐν πάσῃ ἀναστροφῇ γενήθητε.

quietly waiting for the salvation of the Lord'*—that final, complete salvation, which the Lord Himself brings to us, when He comes again. 'Peter's design,' says Calvin, 'is to summon us forth from the world; and most suitable for that end is the thought of Christ's advent. Thither if we would turn our eyes, this world becomes crucified to us, and we to the world.'† Have we ever had this mark of a true Christian experience? Alas! to what a sad degree have we lost it! And meanwhile our plans and affections, our desires and hopes, are still prone to run riot amidst the fleshly and fleeting interests of time. But 'certainly,' remarks Leighton, 'the Captain of our salvation will not own them for His followers, who lie down to drink of these waters, but only such as in passing take of them with their hand.' And again he says: 'This is the place of our trial and conflict, but the place of our rest is above. We must here have "our loins girt;" but when we come there, we may wear our long white robes at their full length without disturbance, for there is nothing there but peace, and without danger of defilement, for "no unclean thing is there," yea, the streets of that New Jerusalem are paved with pure gold. To Him, then, who hath prepared that city for us, let us ever give praise.'

And, finally, if we claim to have our citizenship in heaven, let us justify our pretension, and confirm our hope, and prepare for its fullest realization, by now making holiness—conformity to the Divine nature and will—the object of our most earnest pursuit.‡ Need I say, that the obligation to this has been in no sense impaired by the grace of the Gospel? He who hung upon the cross—our effectual Sin-offering, and glorious Ransom—is the same who sat upon the mountain, and taught His disciples, saying: 'Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God . . . Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.'§

* Lam. 3 : 26.

† 'Consilium enim Petri est, evocare nos extra mundum: ad eam rem aptissima est adventus Christi memoria. Nam si illuc dirigimus oculos, mundus hic nobis crucifixus est, et nos mundo.'

‡ Heb. 12 : 14, (*διώκετε . . . τὸν ἁγιασμὸν.*)

§ Matt. 5 : 8, 48.

Lecture VII.

1 *Peter* 1 : 17–21.

'And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear: forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by Him do believe in God, that raised Him up from the dead, and gave Him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.'

The writer had exhorted his brethren to holiness; he now exhorts them to fear. And the very manner in which he passes from the one exhortation to the other implies a close affinity between the two. It at once reminds us of Paul's expression, 'perfecting holiness in the fear of God;'* the fear of God furnishing a powerful motive to holiness, or rather that temper and element of the soul, in which alone holiness can exist and thrive. 'Fear God,' says the preacher, 'and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.' The first thing is in order to the second, and infallibly secures it. And so God's gracious promise concerning Israel is: 'I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.'†

In Scripture, accordingly, it is quite common to find this fear put for holiness itself, or the sum of true religion. It is not, therefore, such a fear as seized the hearts of our first parents, when, hearing the voice of the Lord God, they hid themselves amongst the trees of the garden; nor such as sud-

* 2 Cor. 7 : 1. † Eccl. 12 : 13; Jer. 32 : 40.

denly quenched the noise of royal revelry in the night of Babylon's overthrow ; nor such as, on some day yet future, shall drive despairing sinners to the unavailing shelter of the mountains and rocks.* It is not the fear of guilty distrust, or of hatred, or of bondage—that fear which hath torment, and which perfect love casteth out ;† but, as our whole context shows, a fear compatible with the highest privileges, attainments, and hopes, of the Christian life. It is the fear of deep humility and reverence, of filial subjection, and adoring gratitude ; the fear which 'blesseth the Lord,' saying, 'His mercy endureth for ever.'‡ It is the fear of Jacob, when he 'awaked out of his sleep' from visions of heavenly grace and glory, and knew that God was in that place ; of Moses, to whom 'the Lord spake face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend ;' of awe-struck seraphim, celebrating with veiled faces the Divine holiness ; of the favored disciples on the mount of the Transfiguration, even while they felt it good to be there ; of repentant and believing Israel, of whom it is foretold, that they 'shall fear the Lord and His goodness in the latter days.'§ It is thus a sentiment no less appropriate to the state of final perfection. Throughout eternity saints and angels, growing ever in the knowledge and the love, will grow also in the fear, of Him whom the redeemed tribes sang of old by the Red Sea as 'fearful in praises.'‖ That 'song of Moses, the servant of God,' is 'the song of the Lamb,' and it is sung evermore by the victorious harpers whom John saw standing on the sea of glass mingled with fire: 'Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty ; just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints. Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name ? for Thou only art holy.'** Yes, 'God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about Him.'††

* Gen. 3 : 8, 10 ; Dan. 5 : 6 ; Rev. 6 : 16.
† Rom. 8 : 15 ; 1 John 4 : 18.
‡ Ps. 135 : 20 ; 118 : 4.
§ Gen. 28 : 16, 17 ; Ex. 33 : 11, (Heb. 12 : 21 ;) Is. 6 : 2, 3 ; Mark 9 : 5, 6 ; Hos. 3 : 5.
‖ Ex. 15 : 11. ** Rev. 15 : 2–4. †† Ps. 89 : 7.

You will observe, however, that our Apostle has special reference to the present time of conflict and trial, or as he calls it, the time of sojourning: '*Pass the time*'—or more exactly, *walk, during the time*—'*of your sojourning, in fear*;* as if there were something in the character of the time itself, that might well add force to the precept.

During the time of their sojourning the children of God are from home. They are in a strange land—a hostile land—beset by many evil influences, and temptations to forget their Father's house, disown or compromise their heavenly citizenship, and cast in their lot with those around. The powerful and crafty spirits of darkness are in league against them, and eagerly watch for their halting. But allied with these—inviting and aiding every external solicitation and assault—is the still remaining corruption of their own nature. There is, therefore, reason enough within and without, why the most mature Christian in this world, even while rejoicing in the full assurance of hope with a joy unspeakable and full of glory, should yet 'serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling.'† Walking in the midst of dangers and snares, it behooves him to walk in fear—the fear, if not of being finally lost, yet of meanwhile stumbling, offending God, bringing dishonor on the truth, prejudicing the souls of others, troubling his own present peace, and impairing his own future reward. It is, indeed, only during the time of sojourning, that these risks exist, and this salutary apprehension is called for. They will have no place in that better land, where the spirits of the just made perfect do always behold the face of God.

But there are two other considerations, by which the exhortation to a religious fear is here mainly enforced. These are the *judicial character of God, and the greatness of the ransom by which sinners have been redeemed.*

* ἐν φόβῳ τὸν τῆς παροικίας ὑμῶν χρόνον ἀναστράφητε (Sin. ἀναστρεφόμενοι)—the verb from which comes ἀναστροφή of v. 15, (see p. 68.)—Χρόνον *(time)* is simply the accusative of duration. The construction which our translators adopted (along with the superfluous supplement, *here)* from previous English versions, is not sustained by the Greek usage.

† Psalm 2 : 11.

1. First, God's judicial character: '*And if ye call on the Father*'—or rather, *And if ye call Him Father**—'*who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, walk, during the time of your sojourning, in fear.*'

Ye call God Father. Our translators seem to have understood Peter as referring to God either as the universal Father or as the Father of Christ. But the context (vs. 3, 4, 14) and the form of the original lead us rather to think of God's paternal relation to believers; and so it is generally explained.† The opinion is even as old as Bede, that there is here an express allusion to the first words of the Lord's Prayer: 'Our Father, which art in heaven.'‡

You call, then, says the Apostle, God Father—your Father. So much may be assumed on the ground simply of your Christian standing;§ and what a motive is there in this, not only for a cheerful, hopeful, loving obedience, but, in your present circumstances, for the utmost care and circumspection, lest by a walk unsuitable to your high profession, you grieve His love, and incur His displeasure, even if you do not provoke Him to cast you off utterly. Remember, however—(and this is here the principal point)—that He whom you call Father is also Judge—every man's Judge—your Judge. Beware of so far presuming on what His grace has done for you, as to suppose that you are now exempt from the scrutiny and control

* Πατέρα ἐπικαλεῖσθε τὸν κτλ.

† Even by some (Stier, Peile, Huther, Alford, etc.) who retain the sense given in our version to the verb: *if* [*since*] *ye call on Him for*, or, *as*, [*a*] *Father, who*, etc.; to which the objection of Steiger and De Wette, that this would require ὡς (*as*) before πατέρα (*Father*) need not be considered fatal. (See 1 Thess. 5 : 8, where De Wette himself has *als Helm.*) Still the exegesis adopted above is simpler, and is followed by very many. Huther objects to it, that, excepting a doubtful passage in Dio Cassius, we have no classical instance of the middle ἐπικαλεῖσθαι in the sense of *to call*, [*nennen.*] But since *to name*, or *surname*, is a very common meaning of the active verb, and in the passive form is frequently recognized in the New Testament, the middle also may be so employed in this case with strict grammatical propriety: 'if ye give to Him, who is the impartial Judge of all, the additional name of *your* Father.'

‡ Bloomfield refers also to Jer. 3 : 19, πατέρα καλέσετέ με, (where some MSS. have ἐπικαλεῖσθε.)

§ But there is no need of changing, as many do, the hypothetical *if* into the assertory or causal *since*. Comp. *Lect. on Thess.* p. 433.

of His holy and righteous administration, or that, in dealing with you, the principles of strictest equity, which rule in all other cases, are to be exchanged for a partial and indulgent favoritism. There is no such '*respect of persons*'* with God. As we all pass under His judgment, so in no case is that judgment determined or affected by aught that is merely outward and adventitious, such as distinctions of nation, or rank, or fortune, or color, or education, or religious profession; except, indeed, as these matters may be found to bear on the one single topic of investigation, to wit, every one's work. '*Without respect of persons,* God *judgeth according to every one's work.*'† So He himself has declared, in the person of Him to whom all judgment is committed: 'Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.'‡

Not *works,* as is sometimes said elsewhere,§ but *work;* and the expression is significant. It embraces whatever pertains to character and the moral activities, inward and outward, and thus includes an immense extent and variety and complication of details, such as no eye but that of Omniscience can traverse, much less take in at a glance, determining with infallible accuracy the precise award that belongs to the whole as a unit. It is true, when our Lord was asked, 'What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?' His reply was: 'This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent.'‖ But it is so, not merely because 'a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law,' but also because in no other way is he sanctified. 'Without faith it is impossible to please' God, faith being the very root—the soul—of all acceptable obedience. It works by love, and so purifies the heart and the life.**

Before the Supreme Tribunal, then, every man is judged according to his work; not the scattered acts, which draw the world's regard, and which alone it censures or applauds, but his entire development, and that in connection with its

* ἀπροσωπολήπτως—(Sin.—λήμπτως)—in the New Testament only here.
† τὸ ἑκάστου ἔργον. ‡ Revelation 22 : 12.
§ Rom. 2 : 6; Rev. 20 : 12, 13. ‖ John 6 : 28, 29.
** Rom. 3 : 28; Heb. 11 : 6; Gal. 5 : 6; Acts 15 : 9.

formative, animating principle—the heart, and all its issues. Where the heart has not believed unto righteousness in the one atoning, reconciling High-Priest, there no confession of the mouth, and no efforts nor sacrifices of the unrenewed, unpardoned soul can avail for salvation.* But this is not all. The soul itself may be resting on the Divine foundation, and still have mighty interests at stake, according as it 'buildeth thereon.' Let no misconception of the blessed doctrine of a gratuitous justification tempt us to forget, that the superstructure also forms a large and essential part of '*the work*,' according to which not only every preacher, but every sincere believer, shall be judged. It would be well for us all, Christian brethren, every morning that we rise from our beds, thoughtfully to repeat, each one to himself, those words of inspiration: 'Let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide, which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.'† As among the lost there are those who shall be beaten with many, others with few stripes, so to the saints of God shall be distributed crowns of varied brightness, as 'star differeth from star in glory.'‡ There is such a thing as having 'the entrance ministered unto us abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ'§—entering the harbor, as I have seen it expressed somewhere, with all sails set; and there is such a thing as 'seeming'—though it may be only seeming—'to come short' of the heavenly rest‖—being cast ashore, as from shipwreck. But in neither case is this the result of chance, or of a capricious, arbitrary allotment. In both cases there is a manifestation of that judgment of God,

* Rom. 10 : 10. † 1 Cor. 3 : 10–15.
‡ Luke 12 : 47, 48; 1 Cor. 15 : 41, (*ἀστὴρ γὰρ ἀστέρος κτλ.*)
§ 2 Peter 1 : 11, (*ἡ εἴσοδος.*) ‖ Heb. 4 : 1.

which, with an absolute impartiality and an unerring exactness, proportions every man's reward to his work. And surely this one principle of God's dealing with us all, His children and His enemies alike, does supply a strong motive for cherishing a spirit of religious fear, as our Apostle here enjoins.

2. The other motive of no less persuasive force is the greatness of the ransom by which sinners have been redeemed.

'*Forasmuch as ye know*,' or simply, *knowing**—what follows is not, as we have seen, the sole ground of the previous exhortation, but an additional, confirmatory consideration; '*knowing that not with corruptible things*,† *silver or gold*,‡ *were ye redeemed from your vain conversation*,' or *walk*—(the word is the same as in the 15th verse)—'received *by tradition from your fathers*,' or *handed down from your fathers*. The whole of this phrase stands for a single compound expression in the original §—one that occurs in the New Testament only here, and cannot be reproduced in form by any English equivalent. *Hereditary*, however, would convey the essential idea. Those, to whom Peter wrote, had been *redeemed from their hereditary vain walk*—a style of reference to their former life, that again favors the idea of their Gentile origin.

That former life of theirs was '*vain*,' idle, empty, as to all the higher ends of existence, and had produced for them, as they were well aware, no lasting good results whatever. 'What fruit had ye then in those things,' the writer seems to say, 'whereof ye are now ashamed?'‖ True, they walked as their fathers had walked before them. The way had been beaten broad and smooth by the feet of many generations. Accordant with their own corrupt tendencies, it was moreover associated with their tenderest recollections; yea, fortified, and almost consecrated to their hearts, by the venerableness of age and ancestral authority. But all this, while it in no degree relieved or justified the vanity of their old life,

* *εἰδότες*. † The Greek order.

‡ *ἀργυρίῳ ἢ χρυσίῳ*. The only other places, I believe, where our version makes *ἤ (or)=καί, (and,)* are Mark 6 : 11 and 1 Cor. 11 : 27—'Most unfairly,' says Alford, in the last instance. A more charitable explanation is, that our translators simply followed their leaders, the Geneva and Bishops' Bibles.

§ *πατροπαράδοτος*. ‖ Rom. 6 : 21.

served rather to render their subjection to sin and death more rigorous and hopeless.

From this miserable bondage, however, they had been freed —freed, not by force, but in law—freed by redemption. A price had been paid for them, and now they walked at liberty, keeping God's commandments. As we have already had occasion to remark in substance, the same act of gracious interposition, that flung open the prison-house of their condemnation, struck also from their spirits the chains of darkness. The same voice, that recalled the dead Lazarus to life, said also: 'Loose him, and let him go.'*

But if 'bought with a price,'† at what price? '*Not,*' says Peter, '*with corruptible things*'—perishable things—even the best and most highly prized of them, '*silver or gold.*' At the most, these things could avail only for an outward, ceremonial redemption.‡ Not all the mines of earth—not all the splendors of the skies—could be taken in exchange for one soul of man. Between such things and that which is spiritual and immortal, there exists no relation of comparative value.§ What, then, was the price? No man 'can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him.' A hecatomb of angels would not suffice. Nothing, nothing but the blood of Christ—'*the precious blood*'—precious in the eye of God—precious in the sight of wondering angels—precious, how precious! to the sprinkled heart of faith—'*the precious blood, as of a lamb faultless and spotless, of Christ.*'‖ The personal holiness of the Saviour enters as an essential ele-

* Acts 12 : 7–10; John 11 : 43, 44. † 1 Cor. 6 : 20.

‡ Ex. 30 : 12–16; Numb. 3 : 46–51; 18 : 15, 16.

§ Ps. 49 : 7–9; Matt. 16 : 26.

‖ The Greek order—*ἀμώμου καὶ ἀσπίλου.*—Brown, after Eadie, (as he says,) gives the verse thus: 'But by precious blood, as of a lamb perfect and spotless, *the blood* of Christ.' This, however, is no new construction, (it may be seen in Pagninus, Beza, Piscator, and one or two others. Alford adopts it,) and it is, I think, erroneous. Mere blood cannot well be opposed to corruptible things, and, in relation to the redemption of sinners, blood is precious, not simply as blood, nor even as the blood of animal sacrifices, however perfect in their kind, (Heb. 9 : 12; 10 : 1–9, etc.,) but only when it is the blood of Christ, and is thought of as His. The common construction, therefore, is to be preferred, which takes *αἵματι (blood)* as immediately defined by *Χριστοῦ, (of Christ,)* and the words interposed, *as of a lamb*, etc., as a parenthetical, explanatory illustration.

ment into all right estimate of the preciousness of His blood, and the efficacy of His atonement.

Here, then, brethren, is the Sin-offering—the true and only Paschal Lamb of heaven and earth. For you will mark the joint interest of both in this great Sacrifice: '*Christ, who verily was foreordained*,' or, if we retain the precise idea and form of the original, '*Christ, foreknown, indeed, before the foundation of the world, but manifested in the last times for you*.'*

'Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world.'† They are known to Him *as* His works, and, therefore, as what He has already *purposed* to do. But the facility of transition from one of these two conceptions, or modes of expression, to the other, is not sufficient warrant for confounding the two. Nor, in fact, have our translators introduced the idea of foreordination in any of the other six places, where this verb or its kindred noun occurs.‡

Chief among the works of God, in the momentousness of its relations both to God and the creatures, is the incarnation of His Son. For this all previous works of creation and providence but prepared the way, and now in the person of Immanuel 'all things consist'§—have their common centre of union, order, and stability. The like preëminence—as our Apostle, we learn from the Book of Acts, loved to teach also in his oral discourses‖—belonged to Christ in the thoughts of God from eternity. As the lamb of the Jewish passover was singled out from the flock some days before it was slain,** so this Lamb of God was '*foreknown before the foundation of the world*,'†† and 'for Him'—for His revelation, His use, and

* προ-(Sin. ἀν-)εγνωσμένου μὲν . . . . φανερωθέντος δὲ ἐπ' ἐσχάτων τῶν χρόνων. It is possible that the *conspicui facti* of Beza's last edition may account for the use by our translators, in this instance, of an adjective in rendering φανερωθέντος; in which particular the English version differs from all other preceding and almost all subsequent versions, English and foreign.—It may also be worth while to note the change from the perfect to the aorist: '*has been* foreknown . . . *was* manifested.'

† Acts 15 : 18. ‡ 1 Peter 1 : 2; Rom. 8 : 29; 11 : 2; etc. Comp. p. 4.

§ Col. 1 : 17, (ἐν αὐτῷ.) ‖ Acts 2 : 23; 3 : 18. ** Exodus 12 : 3–6.

†† Comp. Rev. 13 : 8, (though the construction there is, at best, doubtful. See the *Revision*, Note *i*.)

His glory—the world itself was made.* And even then the ages were suffered to pass silently on. The transgression and fall of angels and of man proclaimed the weakness and insecurity of all creatures at their best estate, and that the final rest of the Creator in them was not yet attained. Dispensation followed dispensation, and still only shadow and type and prophecy turned the devout and wistful eye toward the slowly dawning mystery; till, lo! '*in the last times*'—or rather, *in the last of the times*, or *in the end of the times*;† the Messianic age being at once the consummation of all that preceded it, and itself the ultimate divine economy—the Word was made flesh, and the Christ of God's eternal counsels was '*manifested*' in the Virgin's Son.

Now, whatever other wise and good ends that manifestation was designed to secure, its immediate, primary object was the salvation of men. It was, says Peter, in the same spirit of direct personal application of the general truth to those whom he addresses, that had been already exemplified at the 4th verse—it was '*for you, who through*‡ *Him*'—through the grace and truth and power that came by Him,§ and shined even to you—have cast away your idols, abjured your former vain walk, and now '*believe*‖ *in God*,' not only as the living and true God, but as your own God and Father. This He is, and you are enabled to believe in Him as such, only on the ground of His relations to Christ, and especially because He 'raised'** Christ '*from the dead, and*,' in reward of your Redeemer's deep voluntary humiliation for your sakes, '*gave Him glory*,' by exalting Him to His own right hand, and making Him Head over all things to the Church, '*so that*'—assured thus of the acceptance of your sacrifice, and of the remission of your sins, and

* Col. 1 : 16.

† *ἐπ' ἐσχάτου τῶν χρόνων*, (Sin. *ἐπ' ἐσχάτου τοῦ χρόνου*) is edited by *Wells*, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Theile, Alford, after A, B, C. It is interesting to note how frequently the conclusions of the latest textual criticism were anticipated by an English clergyman more than a century ago. Comp. 2 Peter 3 : 2.

‡ *διά*—as in v. 3, and 1 Thess. 5 : 9, etc.

§ John 1 : 12, 17.

‖ Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford read *πιστοὺς*, (A, B.)

** *ἐγείραντα*. See our version at Matt. 10 : 8; Gal. 1 : 1; Col. 2 : 12, etc.

of the kindness and good will of God, who hath given all power to One who so loved you—'*your faith and hope*,' so long squandered on things that could not profit, '*should*' now and henceforth '*be in God*.'*

But let us, before we close, recall the purpose for which all this is here adduced—namely, to supply another reason why believers should '*walk, during the time of their sojourning, in fear*.' And who, that has any measure of faith in these things, can think of the mighty plan and preparations of God for our redemption from the vanity of a sinful life—can come into the presence of the cross, and see the Lamb amid the fires of the altar, knowing all the while that the purpose of His dying heart was to carry that plan into full effect, by 'redeeming us from all iniquity, and purifying us unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works'†—can then look up to the throne of God, and there behold that same Lamb that was slain still watching over us with His eyes of love—who, I say, can duly ponder these blessed, but most solemn, verities, and not shudder at the thought of sinking down again, through our own carelessness and levity and false security, into the very slavery from which we have been rescued, and so receiving all this grace of God, and of God's Son, in vain? Ah! my hearers, that sin and that hell are not trifles, from which we can be saved only by Christ's precious blood. See that you do not trifle with them, or with that blood. 'Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.'‡

'Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.'§

* ὥστε τὴν πίστιν . . . εἶναι. Most versions, from the Syriac and Vulgate down, agree with the English version in making ὥστε (*so that*) here equal to ἵνα (*in order that*.) Nor is such a use of the former, though rare, without example in the New Testament, (Matt. 27 : 1; Luke 4 : 29, as most now read; 9 : 52.) Many, however, are content with the more common ecbatic sense: *so that your faith and hope are in God*; which, in connection with the first clause of the verse, sounds somewhat tautological. Perhaps neither view is to be entirely excluded; but ὥστε with the infinitive may here express, as sometimes in classical Greek, *the purposed result*; though this cannot, I think, be given quite satisfactorily in English.

† Titus 2 : 14. ‡ Phil. 2 : 12, 13. § Heb. 12 : 28.

Lecture VIII.

1 *Peter* 1 : 22–25.

'Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the Gospel is preached unto you.'

To hope, holiness, and a walk in fear, the Apostle now adds love of the brethren, as an essential, crowning grace, and one springing directly, like those other fruits of the Spirit, from the rich soil of Christian privilege.

In the day of your conversion—he had said—ye were begotten again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; let your hope, in its quality and influence, be perfect like its foundation and warrant. Ye were called with a holy calling by the voice of Him who is holy; be ye in all things, as dear children, imitators of the Divine holiness.* Your Father is also your Judge—an impartial Judge, and the price of your redemption from the vanity of sin was nothing less than the blood of Christ. But your actual deliverance is not yet complete, and meanwhile in these lands of your sojourning—in this present evil world—your road lies through the midst of enemies, and snares, and pitfalls. On all these accounts, therefore, walk in fear. Nor are these various sentiments and aims of the life of faith inconsistent one with the other. On the contrary, they are

* Eph. 5 : 1, (*μιμηταί.*)

mutually helpful; hope promoting and animating holiness, and holiness confirming hope; while both, so far from tending to a careless presumption, are themselves shielded and secured by the spirit of godly jealousy and watchful solicitude.

And there is yet something more—he now seems to say. You sojourn among strangers; but your dwelling is in the household of faith. You call God Father; and so do your brethren. Your faces are toward the heavenly inheritance; and they are joint-heirs with you. See that you fall not out by the way. If the world hates you, love one another. And remember that the obligation in this case is equally sacred and binding as in the cases already mentioned. It is involved in the very nature and design of your conversion and regeneration.

'*Having purified** *your souls*'—that inner spiritual region, in which are the roots of every Christian virtue. Not, indeed, while the soil is yet unbroken, and overrun with all noxious weeds and unclean things. The love, especially, here spoken of, is not any natural instinct, or kindliness of disposition. It is a love peculiar to those new relations of kindred, which are established by the new birth—the love of a purified soul. And the verse before us specifies the means, the Agent, and one result of this purification.

The means by which, or the element *in* which, it is effected, is '*the obedience of the truth*'†—the truth which in the subsequent context is presently identified as the word of the Lord, the Gospel of salvation.‡ No other truth, such as is taught in the schools of human philosophy and learning, avails to the cleansing of the soul; nothing but that Divine word of truth, on which the bleeding Saviour, when about to leave His disciples in the midst of this world's defilements, still relied for their sanctification. The prayer was answered in the blessed experience, not of the Apostles alone, but of them also who believed on Christ through their word; as Peter himself rose up and testified in the Council of Jerusalem, that God had put no difference between Jews and Gentiles, purifying the hearts of both by faith. Those to whom he now

* ἡγνικότες. τῇ † ἐν ὑπακοῇ. ‡ Comp. 2 Cor. 4 : 2; Eph. 1 : 13, etc.

wrote had undergone the same process, and in the same way. They had obeyed the truth, and their obedience was the obedience of faith,* and faith even in its first actings had purified, and in its continuous exercise was still purifying, their souls. As the basis of the present exhortation, it is assumed, that what they had thus gained would not be lost, nor this operation of faith be suspended.†

The text adds, '*through the Spirit*,' and thus represents the Holy Spirit as the Agent, by whose aid these converts, in obeying the truth, had effected the purification of their souls. The doctrine, indeed, of the necessity of Divine grace in order to all spiritual life and effort is again and again taught in this chapter, as it is everywhere else in Scripture. It is even prominent in the very next verse here. But in this particular clause the words are now generally regarded as an interpolation ;‡ and so I shall not dwell on them.

Observe, then, in the third place, the tendency and result of the purification : '*unto brotherly love*,' or '*kindness unfeigned*.'§ Formerly, like other unrenewed men, they had 'lived in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another.' From the lusts that warred in their own members came mutual wars and fightings.‖ But that old tempestuous disorder of the heart had been calmed in the presence of the heavenly Lamb. From 'the leaven of malice and wickedness' their souls had been purified—washed and sanctified. They had thus become at once more capable of loving, and more worthy of each other's love. At the same time there was born within them the sense of a new affinity—the consciousness of the

* John 17 : 17, 20; Acts 15 : 9; Romans 2 : 8; 16 : 26. See p. 20.

† *ἡγνικότες*, therefore, should neither, on the one hand, be restricted to the faith of conversion, nor, on the other, treated as a present participle, (Vulgate, Calvin, etc.,) or an imperative mood, (Luther, Castalio, Carpzov, Pott, etc.)

‡ So Mill, De Wette, Huther, Wiesinger, etc. Griesbach marks them as very doubtful, and they are cancelled by Wells, Meyer, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford, on the authority of Sin. A, B, C, many cursive MSS., and most ancient versions.

§ *φιλαδελφίαν ἀνυπόκριτον*. See on 2 Peter 1 : 7.

‖ Titus 3 : 3; James 4 : 1.

dear, sacred, eternal brotherhood of all who love the one Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Sitting together glad captives at His blessed feet, they could almost anticipate, as, when uttered by His lips, they joyfully assented to, the new commandment: 'Love one another, as I have loved you.'* Every instinct and impulse of the Divine nature whereof they were now partakers responded instantly to the gracious authority of the Master. The nearer they pressed to Him, they found themselves nearer to one another. The great change that had been wrought in each could have no other issue than in a '*brotherly kindness unfeigned*'—love without a mask—'without dissimulation'—'not in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth.'†

And now, in close connection with the principles that evinced the reasonableness of the precept, and supplied strong motives for its observance, the writer presses home the precept itself: '*Having purified your souls in the obedience of the truth unto brotherly kindness unfeigned, out of a pure heart love one another fervently.*'‡ If in your hearts the purity was, and is, unto love, let the combination be seen also in your life; not love without purity, nor yet purity without love. Nay, '*love one another;*' only let the clearness of the stream, that brightens and gladdens the scenes of your daily intercourse, attest the purity of the fountain whence it flows. Then '*love fervently,*' or, as the word§ denotes, *intensely.*

* 1 Cor. 5 : 8; 6 : 11; John 15 : 12.

† Rom. 12 : 9; 1 John 3 : 18.

‡ Wakefield and Brown connect ἐκ καθαρᾶς καρδίας, as a second attributive with φιλαδελφίαν (= *brotherly love out of a pure heart.*) But this introduces into the protasis an unnecessary pleonasm; whereas by retaining both the common construction and the Greek order, as above, we bring out a rather striking rhetorical correspondence in the apodosis, of ἐκ καθαρᾶς καρδίας to τὰς ψυχὰς ὑμῶν ἡγνικότες, ἀλλήλους ἀγαπήσατε to εἰς φιλαδελφίαν, and ἐκτενῶς to ἀνυπόκριτον.—The English supplement, *see that*, was probably suggested simply by a regard to euphony, though it is true that the Greek aorist imperative does convey something of the same impression of urgency. Whitby and Macknight, in translating it by a future, *ye shall* [*will*] *love*, may have been misled by what in Grotius was no doubt an oversight, or error of the press, ἀγαπήσετε.—Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Alford cancel the word καθαρᾶς, (A, B.)

§ ἐκτενῶς. Comp. ἐκτενῆ, ch. 4 : 8.

Yield yourselves without hesitation or reserve to the promptings of your better nature. Be not ashamed of your love, nor afraid to manifest it on all suitable occasions, and in all appropriate ways, even to the laying down, like your Lord, your lives for the brethren. Never forget that, in God's family, love is 'the principal thing'—'the bond of perfectness'—the flower and consummation of the Christian character.*

The 23d verse reverts once more to the fact and the manner of their regeneration, as confirmatory of the obligation to a pure and intense brotherly love: '*Being born again*'—or, according to the rendering of the same word† in the 3d verse, *having been begotten again*. Here, at least, the writer does go back of all human effort or volition. If the readers had 'purified their hearts in the obedience of the truth unto brotherly love unfeigned,' this was sufficient proof that they were alive unto God. But now he again reminds them that that life itself was of God's own imparting. And, as they 'were not redeemed with corruptible things,' so neither had they been begotten again 'of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible'—'not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God,' as the same emphatic opposition is expressed by John.‡

This incorruptible seed—this seed of God§—is here commonly identified with '*the word of God*,' mentioned in the next clause. Others, however, laying perhaps undue stress on the change of prepositions—'begotten again of incorruptible seed, *by* the word of God'—understand by the former the Holy Spirit,‖ or rather, the Holy Spirit, as the power of God, in union with, and working *through*, the Word.** 'Of

* Prov. 4 : 7; 1 Cor. 13 : 13; Col. 3 : 14. Comp. 2 Peter 1 : 5–7.

† ἀναγεγεννημένοι. ‡ John 1 : 13. § 1 John 3 : 9.

‖ Steiger, De Wette.

** Huther, Brückner, Wiesinger.—Σπορά occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. Here Aretius (in the commentary, *satio*) and Bengel (*sementis*; which he understands of *the word of God as preached*, and so distinguishes from the word itself as σπόρος, *semen, seed*) avail themselves of a classical sense, *a sowing*; Brown employs another, *proles, race*. But neither is the common interpretation, σπορά=σπέρμα, entirely without classical warrant. (See Passow, Liddell and Scott.)

His own will,' says James, (1 : 18,) 'begat He us with the word of truth.'

In either case, what honor is put upon the Divine word! It is that through which God regenerates the soul, as well as that in the faith of which His children purify themselves unto brotherly love unfeigned. The latter process and effect, the writer plainly intimates, are rendered possible and certain only by the former. He that is born after the flesh knows nothing of this love. Every power and tendency of his being exclude it utterly. In regeneration, on the contrary, it is just as essentially involved. The incorruptible seed, in whatever heart it alights, is there the germ of a life—an eternity—of love. 'For love is of God, and every one that loveth hath been begotten of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love.* And where shall this natural love of the new creature find its nearest and dearest objects? Let the disciple whom Jesus loved again furnish the answer: 'Every one that loveth Him that begat'—which surely includes all God's true children—'loveth him also that is begotten of Him.'†

What follows is mainly a formal exhibition of the contrast already asserted between the corruptible and the incorruptible, the fleshly and the divine. By his majestic utterance of the worthlessness of the one as compared with the other, the Apostle seeks to deepen the sense of gratitude and of responsibility in those, who, having borne the image of the earthly, were now called to bear, in some measure, even in this present life, the image of the heavenly.

They had '*been begotten again*,' he says, '*not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever*,' or, as the verse is now generally read by critical editors,‡ *through God's living and abiding word.* And then immediately, taking up the cry which Isaiah (40 : 6–8) heard of old sounding forth from the secret place of thunder, he exclaims: '*For all flesh*'—not merely the frail body, but all that comes of the fleshly birth; man, the whole of man, man

* 1 John, 4 : 7, (γεγέννηται.) † 1 John 5 : 1.
‡ On the authority of the oldest manuscripts, (Sin. A, B, C.)

in all countries, throughout all generations—'*all flesh is as** *grass, and all the glory of man*'—or, according to the reading† now universally adopted, *all its glory*, that is, all the glory of the flesh ; and by this we are to understand the noblest and fairest attainments and doings of the natural man at his best estate, in the most advanced stages of his civilization, and the highest development of all his powers, intellectual and moral ; '*all flesh is as grass, and all its glory as the flower of grass*'—an illustration of human frailty common in Scripture,‡ and to the eastern mind peculiarly vivid. '*Withered is the grass, and its flower is fallen off.*'§ We look at it, and it is gone ; and what now can we say of it but that it 'withered and disappeared'? by far the most memorable thing in its history ; '*but*,' in the midst of this universal decay, '*the word of the Lord*,' in conspicuous, solitary grandeur, '*abideth for ever*.' As a word of promise—the revelation of God's eternal counsels—it thus abideth ; and neither the passions and prejudices of men, nor the gates of hell, shall prevail against it. 'Hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?'‖ But that is not all, nor is it, perhaps, what Peter chiefly meant. As the seed also of regeneration—as the quickening, purifying power in the human soul—the word of the Lord no less abideth, abideth for ever, and makes every true believer a partaker of its own immortality. 'He that believeth in me,' said the Lord, Himself the Living Word, 'though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die.'**

* Lachmann cancels ὡς, (A, C,) for which Sin. has ὡσεί.

† αὐτῆς, for ἀνθρώπου, is approved by Mill and adopted by Wells and all the recent editors, on the authority of the oldest manuscripts, versions, and Fathers. Sin. has πᾶσα ἡ δόξα αὐτοῦ, afterward corrected into πᾶσα δόξα αὐτῆς.

‡ Ps. 103 : 15, 16 ; Is. 37 : 27 ; 51 : 12 ; James 7 : 10, 11.

§ ἐξηράνθη ὁ χόρτος, καὶ τὸ ἄνθος αὐτοῦ (the αὐτοῦ is cancelled by Lachmann after Sin. A, B) ἐξέπεσε. Alexander's remark on the parallel clauses of Is. 40 : 7 is equally applicable here : 'The present form usually given to the verbs conveys the sense correctly as a general proposition, but not in its original shape as a description of what has actually happened, and may be expected to occur again.' The above is but an approach to this idiomatic use of the aorist. Wiclif comes yet closer, *dried up . . . fell down ;* and so the Italian of Martini : *seccò . . . ne cascò.*'

‖ Numbers 23 : 19.

** John 11 : 25, 26.

But what *is* this '*word of the Lord*'? it might be asked, and where shall we look for it, to which are ascribed properties and effects so glorious? The word I speak of, says Peter, is not some high edict that has gone forth to distant worlds, or to the armies of heaven. It concerns this world of ungodly, dying men—your own business and bosoms. 'It is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it;' 'that is,' subjoins Paul, 'the word of faith, which we preach.'* And it is not improbable, that the Apostle of the circumcision here intended to indorse that very claim, when he adds: '*Now*,† *this is the word which in the Gospel was preached unto you*'‡—which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand.§ By whatever various methods the word of the Lord has at sundry times been delivered unto men from the beginning, the sum of these successive revelations was conveyed to you by Christ's evangelists, when they came proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation through Jesus of Nazareth, in whose person and work are concentrated all testimonies of Apostles and Prophets—the manifold messages of God's truth and grace.

1. Dear readers, the same word of the Lord—the same glorious Gospel—is now preached to you. And it is this day as young, and fresh, and strong, and imperishable, as it ever was. It 'abideth for ever.' And the flesh is still as frail, and all the glory of the flesh still as fleeting, as of old. The voice from heaven which Isaiah heard, and whose solemn witness was reaffirmed by Peter seven hundred years after, still soundeth, and human history is but the echo of its cry: 'All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth.' There is no spot on this round earth, where we can escape the admo-

* Deut. 30 : 11–14; Rom. 10 : 8.
† δέ.
‡ τό εὐαγγελισθέν.
§ 1 Cor. 15 : 1.

nition, and the rebuke to our levity and pride. It startles the wayfarer in the bright savannas of the south, and amid the sands of the desert, and the icy desolation of the pole. It whispers from the green mounds of western forests, and is repeated by the billows of ocean as they roll above the multitudes that have gone down to slumber in the silent depths. With thrilling emphasis it speaks from the ruins of Memphis and of Thebes, of Nineveh and Babylon, of Petra and Tyre, of Athens and Rome; but with an accent more piercing, and tender, and subduing, than all of these, it shakes our hearts, and fills our homes with tears, when our own loved ones die. As husband, or wife, or child, father or mother, sister or brother, sinks from our embrace into the weakness and dishonor and separation of the tomb, we are roused once more from our apathy by a new sense of the old truth, and we put on sackcloth, and bow down together, as in the presence of God.

And is there, then, no hope for man? I answer, there is none, save only what is provided by that word of the Lord, which in the Gospel is preached unto you. 'They,' says Calvin, 'who wander beyond these bounds of revelation—the Law, the Prophets, the Gospel—shall for the word of the Lord gain nothing but impostures of Satan and their own frenzies.* Look up, then, weeping mourners, and through your tears behold this great, this only true and inextinguishable light in the darkness. Behold here, amid the sunken rocks, and shifting quicksands, and unresting waters of time, the beacon of God's own rearing—the eternal Pharos of the world—lifting its head, bright, steadfast, and unmovable, over the perilous waste. Here, at last, is something sure for us—something, in the midst of all the uncertainties and treacheries of this world, on which we may implicitly and safely rely. Lovers and friends may be removed, or may stand aloof, from us, and kings and nations may perish. But 'the word of the Lord abideth for ever.' 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but that word shall not pass away.'† Never yet has it been known to fail any poor soul, that leaned its full

* 'Lex, Prophetæ, Evangelium. Extra hos revelationis fines qui vagantur, pro verbo Domini non nisi Satanæ imposturas et sua deliria apprehendent.'

† Matt. 24 : 35.

weight on it. To this word, then, commit yourselves with all confidence, ye scattered sojourners. Let it be your strength and your stay—your present solace, and your everlasting song; while all things else, the world and the fashion of it, your despisers and your sorrows alike, are passing quickly away.

2. But remember, secondly, that even this mighty word has power to bless and save, only as it is believed and obeyed. Alas! how is this simple truth wilfully forgotten by multitudes, who may yet be said to be exemplary in their attendance on public ordinances! It remains true nevertheless, that the only legitimate ends of all preaching and hearing of the Gospel are, that sinners may be begotten again of the incorruptible seed, and that Christ's disciples may be sanctified through the truth. Great was the joy of Paul, when he could look round on the members of a church, and say: 'In Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel.' And that joy was doubled when he heard, like John, of his 'children walking in truth.'*

3. Let me, finally, ask those of you who profess faith in the Gospel, whether your obedience of the truth is such as purifies your souls from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit; whether, in particular, it has tended in any measure to a brotherly love unfeigned. If there is no intensity in your love, is it at least strong enough to keep you from slighting and insulting, envying and backbiting, 'wronging and defrauding, and that your brethren'?† The test, I fear, is one which, if faithfully applied, would instantly detect and expose, to the consciences even of the self-deceivers, the utter hollowness and vanity of a vast amount of what passes for a Christian profession. Says the good Archbishop Leighton: 'Men are subject to much hypocrisy this way, and deceive themselves; if they find themselves diligent in religious exercises, they scarcely once ask their hearts how they stand affected this way, namely, in love to their brethren. They can come constantly to the church, and pray, it may be, at home, too, and yet cannot find in their hearts to forgive an injury.'—The Lord deliver us all from so great a wickedness, so fatal a delusion!

* 1 Cor. 4 : 15; 3 John 4. † 1 Cor. 6 : 8.

Lecture IX.

1 *Peter* 2 : 1–3.

'Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.'

The various exhortations contained in the previous chapter from the 13th verse—to hope, holiness, fear, and brotherly love—are here followed by a general requisition that believers grow; grow in these and all other graces and manifestations of the Divine life; '*grow*,' according to the now generally received reading of the verse, '*unto salvation*.'* Let us, then, speak, I., of Christian growth; II., of the means whereby this is promoted; III., of what is required in order to the effective use of the means; and IV., of the motives to such a use, as these several points are presented in the words before us.

I. First, Christians are to '*grow*'—'*grow unto salvation*.'

This implies present immaturity—that they have not yet reached 'the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.'† Their hope is ofttimes indistinct and tremulous, even when it is not averted from its appropriate object. Their holiness is stained by innumerable defilements of the flesh and the spirit. Their fear dissolves into a carnal security or a worldly dissipation. Nor does 'brotherly love continue.'‡ But, if they are Christians indeed, and not in name merely, all these elements of the new creature exist at least in the germ in

* εἰς σωτηρίαν, (Sin. A, B, C. Many cursive manuscripts, ancient versions, and Fathers.)

† Eph. 4 : 13

‡ Heb. 13 : 1.

every one of them. The light has shined out of darkness, and not one ray is wanting. It may have to struggle still with the mists of morning, and its path may be through clouds and storms. But that path is ever upward and onward 'unto the perfect day.'* Or, keeping to the figure of the text, we may say of every new-born babe in God's household, that it is born a living child, complete in all the faculties that shall adorn the glorified saint; and the proof that it lives is, that it grows.

The growth, it is true, may be slow and, for a time, even imperceptible. Obstructed by the still remaining constitutional taint of the old nature, it may be hindered also by unfavorable circumstances, and interrupted by the diseases incident to childhood, or through neglect of the appropriate means of growth. But the tendency is there, and that tendency is to be seconded and fostered by the careful appliances of a Christian education. It must likewise be understood that, so long as the believer is in this world, his childhood lasts, and so long, therefore, lasts his education. To 'grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ'†—this should be his life-long aim and endeavor. It was 'Paul the aged'—'ready to be offered'—who from his prison in Rome wrote those words of humility and of zeal unquenched: 'Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.'‡ It is the same goal to which Peter here points his brethren: '*that ye may grow unto salvation.*'

There is, indeed, a salvation to which believers now attain —consisting in freedom from condemnation, deliverance from the reigning power of sin, the earnest of the Spirit, and the hope of glory. But the eternal glory thus hoped for is itself, in the highest sense of the word, salvation; and unto it, or into it, believers are to grow. As it is the object and end of

* 2 Cor. 4 : 6; Prov. 4 : 18. † 2 Peter 3 : 18.
‡ Philem 9; 2 Tim. 4 : 6; Phil. 3 : 13, 14.

all their present efforts of self-denial and self-purification, so every increase of holiness is a step in advance toward that spiritual perfection in which it mainly consists.

II. Now, in the second place, the particular *means* here specified, by which this growth is to be promoted, is '*the sincere milk of the word*.'

The original phrase* is, in form at least, somewhat different, and perhaps we should come nearer, not merely the form, but the sense also, if we said, *the rational, guileless milk*. There is no doubt, however, that the word is what is meant; the word which, according to the definition that had just been given, is preached to men in the Gospel; that living and abiding word of God, through which the soul is begotten again. Here we are taught that the same word, which at first is the incorruptible seed—the principle, or the instrument, of regeneration—continues ever after to be the natural, necessary food of the new life; that by which, *in*† the constant use of which, God's children grow.

In two other places‡ milk is distinguished from meat—strong meat; and then it stands for the elementary doctrine of the Gospel, or for the simpler forms of doctrinal statement and illustration. In the present instance, that distinction is not thought of. It is not some Christians, as compared with others, but all Christians while in this world, as compared with what they themselves 'shall be'§ in the world to come, that are addressed as 'new-born babes.' And, in harmony with that figure, the word is called milk, as being the nourishment suitable to their infancy. This nourishment may be variously prepared and administered, as in the written record, or through the ministries and ordinances of the Church. But in all cases that which sustains and strengthens is, not the external medium through which it is conveyed, but the 'word' itself 'that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.'‖ This alone is the food of faith, and by it believers grow, nor do they ever outgrow their need of it.

The Apostle commends it to them as *the rational* or *reason-*

* τὸ λογικὸν ἄδολον γάλα. † ἐν αὐτῷ. ‡ 1 Cor. 3 : 2; Heb. 5 : 12–14.
§ 1 John 3 : 2. ‖ Matt. 4 : 4.

*able milk.** The expression he uses occurs once again in the New Testament, where Paul, exhorting the Romans (12 : 1) to a holy self-consecration, calls it their 'reasonable service'—the service, that is, of the reason—soul—spirit—in opposition to the material rites and fleshly sacrifices of the law. So here '*the reasonable milk*'—(just as we often speak of mental food, intellectual food)—is the milk adapted by its very nature to the nobler, spiritual life of man, because containing in itself all the elements required for the satisfaction and enlargement of every power and aspiration of the regenerate soul. Of no other word—science—philosophy—can this be affirmed, than the Divine word, 'the word which in the Gospel is preached unto you.'

And then, with reference probably to the '*all guile*' mentioned in the 1st verse, Peter speaks of this '*rational milk*' as being also '*guileless*'—'uncrafty,' says Jeremy Taylor; 'it is full of reason, but it hath no tricks; it is rational, but not crafty.' There is in it no deceptiveness—no lurking poison, under the semblance of milk.† Or this second epithet may be taken, as indeed it is by most, in the sense of *pure, unmixed, unadulterated;* ‡ and so it conveys a caution against all those human additions, by which in the primitive and every subsequent age false teachers have corrupted the truth as it

* In resolving the adjective (λογικός) into the genitive of the material or substance *(of the word)* our translators followed several old interpreters, including Beza, and one or two English versions. Many have done the same thing since. And in favor of it is the apparent suggestion of λογικόν by λόγου, (ch. 1 : 23,) and the prevailing objective sense of the noun in the New Testament, as *word, speech, doctrine.* The other explanation appeals to the ordinary import of the adjective itself, including Rom. 12 : 1, and the patristic usage, (for which see Steiger, and the citation in Bretschneider, from *Test.* xii. *Patr.* p. 547 : προσφέρουσι (the angels) κυρίῳ ὀσμὴν εὐωδίας λογικὴν καὶ ἀναίμακτον προσφοράν.) The Syriac, it is worthy of note, combines the two methods : = *long for the word, as for milk pure and spiritual.*

† Augustine (Serm. 353) calls it *innocens;* with which compare Shakespeare, *Winter's Tale,* iii. 2 :

> 'The *innocent milk* in its most innocent mouth.'

‡ Comp. 2 Cor. 4 : 2, δολοῦντες τὸν λόγον, *falsifying, corrupting the word.* The ambiguity of the Greek is well represented by the English version, (after the Geneva Bible, Pagninus, Beza,) if along with the present prevailing import of *sincere,* we recognize the older usage, and the supposed etymological force, *(sine cera.)*

is in Jesus, or speculators have sought at least to recommend it to the popular taste.

III. But, in order to the profitable use of even the pure milk of the word, there are certain *conditions prerequisite;* and these we were to notice in the third place.

1. There is, first, the necessity of spiritual *life.* Addressing his brethren as *new-born babes*, the Apostle assumes that in their case this life existed. Without it, as there can be no growth, so neither is there any desire after the means of growth. Whatever may be true as regards the duty of all men, it is only the soul that has been born again, and so made alive unto God, that can have any *genuine* relish for the things of God, or 'increase with the increase of God.'* And this is quite sufficient to explain how there may be a great deal of Bible-reading and Gospel-hearing, and very little delight in, or profit from, either. What the Lord said of the body may be extended to the soul, 'The life is more than meat;' and in the vast majority of instances the life itself is wanting.

2. Not only life, however, is needed. If the soul is to enjoy the full benefit of the provisions of grace, it must also be careful of its spiritual *health;* avoiding all occasions of disease, and especially maintaining a constant guard against the evil tendencies of its own hereditary, constitutional taint, as I called it formerly. '*Laying aside,*' says the Apostle, '*all malice and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envyings,*† *and all evil-speakings.*'

He had been exhorting believers just a little before to mutual, brotherly love. That exhortation is now not a little strengthened, in passing, by an intimation, that the indulgence of the opposite sentiments would be found altogether incompatible with the prosperous advance of their Christian life. Accordingly, the word translated '*malice,*' which sometimes ‡ stands for *badness, wickedness, depravity* in general, is properly taken here to denote that depravity in its malignant

* Col. 2 : 19. † φθόνους—as in Gal. 5 : 21.
‡ As in 1 Peter 2 : 16, and Acts 8 : 22.

aspect toward others, of which various particular expressions are immediately subjoined; as '*guile*,' with all its arts of deception and lying in wait; '*hypocrisies*,'* the many masks and disguises of insincerity; '*envyings*,' grudging and repining at our neighbor's good of whatever kind; '*evil-speakings*,'† as railing, slander, detraction, insinuation, the eager or cowardly taking up and propagating, where we do not ourselves invent, injurious reports against our neighbor's reputation.

All such malevolent feelings and habits are among 'the works of the flesh'—apples of Sodom, which cannot flourish on the same heavenly vine with 'the fruit of the Spirit.'‡ The soul, while feeding on this garbage, can have no taste for '*the rational, guileless milk*;' even as the man, who comes to God's altar with an unforgiving heart, finds no acceptance there for even his costliest gifts. The Apostle, therefore, requires, as an indispensable condition of Christian growth, that, in the exercise of a rigorous and habitual self-denial, these affections and lusts of the old man—all of them and in every form—be utterly *laid aside*, or *put off*, like decayed or infected raiment. The expression is one that Paul often employs in similar relations,§ and James once, in a passage still more kindred to our own: 'Wherefore, laying aside all filthiness and superfluity of malice, in meekness receive the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.'‖

3. When the soul has thus been purified from 'the leaven of malice and wickedness,'** one unfailing sign of its healthy condition is a '*desire*'—an *earnest desire*††—for the nutriment of the Divine word. And may we not, then, regard this very longing of the '*new-born babes*' as still another requisite to such a use of '*the rational, sincere milk*' as will secure their spiritual growth? Certainly the absence of this natural appetite—

* ὑποκρίσεις—opposed to ἀνυπόκριτον of ch. 1 : 22.

† Sin.: πᾶσαν καταλαλιάν; afterward corrected into the plural.

‡ Gal. 5 : 19, 22.

§ ἀποθέμενοι. (Rom. 13 : 12; Eph. 4 : 22, 25; Col. 3 : 8; Heb. 12 : 1.

‖ So James 1 : 21 may be closely rendered—ἀποθέμενοι . . . κακίας, ἐν πραΰτητι δέξασθε τόν ἔμφυτον κτλ.

** 1 Cor. 5 : 8.

†† ἐπιποθήσατε. The intensive force of the verb and its cognates is everywhere else recognized in our common version.

the feeling of satiety, weariness, indifference, to say not, of aversion—is a sure token of an unhealthy and pining soul.

4. There is just one thing more to be noticed here, namely, that, if we would grow by means of the word, it is important *that we use the word for that end: 'earnestly desire the rational, sincere milk, that by it ye may grow;'* as if he had said: See that you aim at, and rest satisfied with, no inferior result. But this brings us to

IV. Our last point—the *motives*, by which the exhortation is enforced. For surely,

1. In this *growth itself* there is blessing enough to be its own motive and great reward. To know more and more of 'the love of Christ which passeth knowledge'—to receive into our ransomed nature more and more of 'the fulness of God'—to hold on our heavenward way, waxing 'stronger and stronger' in the service of our Lord—while, like the face of the earth in the spring-time, we are 'changed' daily 'into the same image'*—what other interest can there be so dear as this to the Christian heart? There are other considerations, however, suggested by the text. Observe,

2. The introductory word, *Wherefore*—literally, '*Laying aside, therefore,*'† etc.—referring back to the illustrious attributes of the word, as these had been set forth at the close of the first chapter. It had there been magnified as the word of the Lord—as the incorruptible seed—as the living, abiding, everlasting word; and the churches had been assured that the word, of which such things could be said, was none other than that which in the Gospel had been preached unto them. Seeing, then, says Peter, this precious word decays not—grows not old nor obsolete, and can as little be exhausted, as it can be superseded by the word of man or of angel, what remains but that ye 'follow on to know' it—'give yourselves wholly' to it—and drink deep, drink daily, drink for ever, of the Divine fountains—these 'breasts of consolations'?‡ This might the rather be expected of them, as,

* Eph. 3 : 19; Job 17 : 9; 2 Cor. 3 : 8. † *οὖν.*
‡ Hosea 6 : 3; 1 Tim. 4 : 15; Is. 66 : 11.

3. In the third place, they had *already experienced the regenerating power* of the word: '*as new-born* babes.*' This is not so much a comparison, as a reason: '*As being* new-born babes—*inasmuch as ye are* new-born babes—earnestly desire the rational, sincere milk, that by it ye may grow unto salvation.' I spoke before of the new birth as a needful preliminary to a hearty love of, or a continuous profiting by, the word. But it is not less evidently a strong motive to perseverance in the same duties. That which, in the Spirit's hand, is able to quicken the dead in sin, may well be relied on as able also to nourish the life which it imparts, and 'make wise unto salvation'† the children of grace. If, moreover, they remember still that they are but children, what more natural than that they should be ambitious to grow?

4. And finally, as they had been made subjects of the Gospel's regenerating power, so they had likewise tested the sweetness and blessedness of its revelations: '*If so be*'—or, *if indeed*,‡ as you profess, and as I fully believe—'*ye have tasted that the Lord* is *gracious*,' *good, kind;* so the word is almost always translated elsewhere, and never as here.§ Indeed, the passage is a direct, though not a formal, quotation‖ from Psalm 34 : 8: 'Oh! taste and see that the Lord'—Jehovah—'is good.' Now this, says Peter, who deems it not robbery to apply to Jesus what David had spoken of the most high God—this you did,** when you believed in the Lord Christ whom the preached word made known to you, and the precious experience has been often renewed in your subsequent fellowship with Him through that same word. What made the word, when it was found, and you did eat it, the joy and rejoicing of your hearts, was just this, that therein 'the kind-

* ἀρτιγέννητα—nowhere else in the New Testament.

† 2 Tim. 3 : 15.

‡ εἴπερ (Lachmann reads εἰ, after Sin. A, B,)—not *since*, *because*, etc., as it is often rendered. See *Lect. on Thess.* p. 433.

§ The other places where χρηστὸς occurs are Matt. 11 : 30; Luke 5 : 39; 6 : 35; 1 Cor. 15 : 33; Eph. 4 : 32. Comp. also the common version of the kindred verb at 1 Cor. 13 : 4, and of the noun at 2 Cor. 6 : 6; Eph. 2 : 7; Col. 3 : 12; Titus 3 : 4, etc.

‖ Through the Septuagint.

** The aorist—ἐγεύσασθε.

ness and love of God our Saviour toward man'* was revealed to your souls. You 'tasted,' and you are well aware that you did no more than taste, 'of the heavenly gift'—of that which shall be the eternal satisfaction and joy of all the redeemed. With what confidence, then, in your ready compliance may I not say: Open your mouths wide, and the good Lord will fill them. Enlarge to the uttermost both your capacities and your desires, and you will still find this cup of blessing—this river of God—as full as at the first.†

Such, brethren, is the duty of Christians to grow, to grow unto salvation—such the means and the conditions of growth—such the motives to a careful observance of the conditions, and an earnest use of the means, for that end.

And now 'examine yourselves . . . prove your own selves.'‡ Are you living in the constant sense of the obligation, and are you habitually striving, in the way which Christ's Apostle here prescribes, to fulfil it? I doubt not that most of you are accustomed to attend, with a greater or less degree of regularity, where, in the public reading and preaching of the word, '*the rational, sincere milk*,' as Peter calls it, is dispensed to 'the household of faith.'§ But the question is: With what feelings—for what purpose—do you so attend?

Do you '*earnestly desire*' the word—the word of the Lord? Have you ever felt—do you now feel—in any measure whatever, what the Psalmist expressed, when he cried out: 'Oh! how love I Thy law! It is my meditation all the day. . . My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto Thy judgments at all times'?‖ If so, then several other things are certain. Your Bibles do not lie in your houses, the week through, sealed books to you and your children. You are not satisfied in that respect with having half a dozen copies somewhere around, or one very fine copy exhibited on your parlor table. And when the Sabbath comes, it is not at all a question with you, Shall I go to the house of God this morning? You do

* Jer. 15 : 16; Titus 3 : 4.
† Heb. 6 : 4, 5; Ps. 81 : 10; 1 Cor. 10 : 16; Ps. 65 : 9.
‡ 2 Cor. 13 : 5. § Gal. 6 : 10. ‖ Ps. 119 : 20, 97.

not then find that, on Saturday night, you were so busy with the world, that you have no strength nor heart left for the sanctuary and the Gospel. Quite as little do you then think either of depriving yourselves of 'that meat which endureth unto everlasting life,' because, forsooth, whether accidentally or by your own invitation, you have friends with you, for whom you must prepare 'the meat which perisheth,'* or of riding off on your excursions to tempt others to a like profanation of holy time. No, brethren; they of whom such things are true, while they are flaunting in the robe of Christian profession —let them at least, if they repent not, be disowned by the Christian Church. They may once 'have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come.' But, alas! they have 'fallen away . . . seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame.' They take rank with 'them who draw back unto perdition,' not with 'them that believe to the saving of the soul.'† All too plainly they have no love of, no desire for, the children's bread.

And I cannot but think also, that, where this desire is such as our text describes—the longing of new-born babes—you will not grudge a little pains so to order the affairs of your shops and households, as to leave you at liberty to avail yourselves likewise of such week-day opportunities as the Church provides for your greater safety and refreshment amidst life's temptations, toils, and cares.

But I asked not only with what feelings, but for what purpose, you come to church. The one question, however, is really involved in the other. If you sincerely and heartily love the word, it is because of the spiritual blessings which it has already conveyed to you, and because you have thus learned that therein is the life and strength of your souls. Not, therefore, to see and to be seen—not from a regard to social custom and public decency—not to relieve in some measure the solitariness and dulness of the Sabbath—not to be entertained by fine singing or fine preaching—not by your attendance to compliment the preacher, or express your de-

* John 6 : 27. † Heb. 6 : 5, 6; 10 : 39.

nominational preference, any more than you would think by your absence to show your poor spite at something or somebody—for none of these ends do the children of God repair to their Father's house ; but that, eating and drinking at His table, within the sound of His voice, and beneath the blessing of His smile, they may grow thereby—grow in faith, in love, in holiness, in hope—grow thus unto salvation, into their predestined meetness for the service and the feast, of eternity.

Lecture X.

1 *Peter* 2 : 4–6.

'To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner-stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded.'

These verses are closely connected, not only in grammatical construction but also in sense, with what goes before. The writer had been speaking of the duty of believers to grow unto salvation, as the result of a loving, earnest, constant use of the same word of God, through which they are regenerated, and brought to know the kindness of the Lord. It is still essentially the same duty that is here exhibited under a different figure, and more in the light of a privilege.

The figure is taken from the temple of Jerusalem—that object, of all others on earth, the dearest and most sacred to the Jewish heart. It is true that at this time the glory had departed from it, and all its solemn magnificence of rite and structure was even now ready to vanish away. But the Apostles of Christ had also come to know, that the worship of Israel's God was not therefore to cease from among men, and that the great catastrophe so near at hand would turn out rather 'unto the furtherance of the Gospel.'* At this very moment the foundations had been laid of another temple, and its walls were going up without hands, or the sound of hammer or axe or any tool of iron; a building against which no weapon should prosper, nor the gates of hell prevail, and

* Phil. 1 : 12.

whose imperishable, holy shrine is God's chosen rest for ever.* In the language of Paul, when illustrating the same high theme by the analogy of marriage: 'This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.'†

Observe, then, what is here said of Christ, and of Christians, and of the relations between these two parties.

I. First, of *Christ;* who, though not named, is undoubtedly referred to in the fourth verse. '*To whom coming*'—that is, to '*the Lord*' of the verse preceding. And it is well for you again to note how easily, without argument or explanation of any kind, the Apostle applies to the man Christ Jesus what the Psalmist sang of Jehovah, God of Israel. For that Peter was really thinking of the Psalm, (34 : 8,) and that the coincidence of phrase in the third verse was not undesigned, is only a fair inference from that large and intimate acquaintance with the Old Testament Scriptures, which appears in all his discourses and Epistles, and of which the present context supplies still other illustrations.

In speaking of the Saviour as '*a living stone*,' or *the Living Stone*—'*to whom coming, the Living Stone*'‡—the writer employs no original figure of his own, but a perfectly well-known metaphorical designation of the Messiah. The Jewish Council had no difficulty in apprehending the meaning and force of our Apostle's interpretation of Ps. 118 : 22, when in his address on the day after Pentecost he named the hated Nazarene, and exclaimed: 'This is the stone which was set at naught of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.' To the same passage, more fully quoted in v. 7, the allusion is scarcely less obvious in the verses before us; which, moreover, in that exuberance of proof from the Old Testament, or of reference to it, which is so often exemplified in the New, and remarkably so in the first ten verses of this chapter, expressly cite in confirmation,§ though with a few

* Dan. 2 : 34; 1 Kings 6 : 7; Is. 54 : 17; Matt. 16 : 18; Ps. 132 : 13, 14.

† Eph. 5 : 32.

‡ *πρὸς ὃν προσερχόμενοι, λίθον ζῶντα.*

§ Instead of *διὸ καὶ, Wherefore also,* all the recent editors read *διότι, because,* (after Sin. and the uncials generally.) So Alford, though in the commentary he retains, and insists on, the *καὶ.*

unessential variations from both the original Hebrew and the Septuagint Greek, what 'is *contained in* another *Scripture*'* —Is. 28 : 16.

If now we combine these testimonies, the apostolic and the prophetic, we learn the following important lessons respecting our Lord's place and relations in the spiritual building :

1. In Himself, He is the '*living stone.*' The epithet is a favorite one with the Apostle,† who in the first chapter speaks also of our 'living hope,' and of God's 'living word.' Its use in the present connection at once lifts the subject beyond all earthly comparison. It was probably Peter who, on one occasion, admiringly drew the Master's regard to the stones of the Jewish temple.‡ His own eye was now fixed on a far greater wonder—a 'Living Stone,' that could not have come from any of the dull, dark mines of this lower world. This was none other than the eternal Son of God, the Prince of life, having life in Himself, who, as the Creator and Upholder of all worlds, diffuses and sustains life throughout the universe, and who, as Mediator and Redeemer, laid down His life that He might take it again—rising from the dead, death's Conqueror, to die no more, and becoming the Resurrection and the Life to all believers.

2. In the second place, this Living Stone is the '*chief corner-stone*' of the Church ; not, as some have supposed, the highest or top corner-stone,§ but rather the corner foundation ;‖ that by which the whole building is mainly supported and united. Strictly speaking, He is the only foundation, and in that highest sense, as Paul most earnestly affirms, none other can be

* Tischendorf and Alford cancel *τῇ* before *γραφῇ*, (after Sin. A, B.) Lachmann alone edits *περιέχει ἡ γραφή*, (C)—a reading probably formed on the Vulgate, *(continet Scriptura,)* or else a mere escape from the difficulty of the common text. Of that text the only explanations worth mentioning are that which supplies some such subject as *ἡ περιοχή, τόπος τις*, etc., and (which I prefer) that which makes *περιέχει* here a neutral, impersonal verb, as the simple *ἔχει* is often used. A good parallel is furnished by Josephus, *Ant.* xi. 4, 7.

† Bengel : 'Amat Petrus epitheton *vivus.*'

‡ Mark 13 : 1.

§ So Wiclif understood the Vulgate *summum angularem ;* and so Sharpe.

‖ See the Septuagint, Is. 28 : 16, *ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἐμβάλλω εἰς τὰ θεμέλια Σιὼν λίθον . . . ἀκρογωνιαῖον . . εἰς τὰ θεμέλια αὐτῆς.*

laid.* But in a secondary, ministerial sense, the same Paul, in a passage kindred to the present, describes the Church as 'built upon the foundation of the Apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone;' and in the twelve foundations of the wall of the New Jerusalem John also beheld 'the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb.'† Of that number the writer of this Epistle was in many respects the most eminent, nor was he likely ever to forget the gracious significance of his own Christ-given name. It may even be that the remembrance of these things led him in his humility, while reproducing, it would appear, that Pauline description of the Christian temple, to drop altogether the reference to auxiliary foundations, and exhibit only the incommunicable glory of Him who, in a way equally peculiar and exclusive, is 'the Apostle and High-Priest of our profession.'‡ With no less cordiality and eager self-renunciation than Paul, Peter could say, 'Not I, but Christ;' 'By the grace of God I am what I am;' 'Christ is all, and in all.'§ None but He was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification. None but He has thus made an end of sins, and brought in everlasting righteousness. He alone hath abolished death, and received from the Father the Spirit without measure, and is now the Head over all things to the Church, able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him.‖ Who else on earth or in heaven can occupy the foundation-corner? Nay, dislodge Him but for an instant from His place of preëminence, and that instant the mighty fabric rushes down into hideous and irreparable ruin.

3. But, in the third place, this '*Living Stone*,' though the '*chief corner-stone*,' was '*disallowed indeed of men*,' or *by men, indeed, rejected***—tried and rejected. As if it were said: So much must needs be confessed, nor do I any longer shrink from the shame of the cross. It *is* true, the world 'knew

* 1 Cor. 3 : 11. † Eph. 2 : 20; Rev. 21 : 14.
‡ Heb. 3 : 1. § Gal. 2 : 20; 1 Cor. 15 : 10; Col. 3 : 11.
‖ Rom. 4 : 25; Dan. 9 : 24; 2 Tim. 1 : 10; John 3 : 34; Eph. 1 : 22; Heb. 7 : 25.
** *ὑπὸ ἀνθρώπων μὲν ἀποδεδοκιμασμένον.* Everywhere else, (seven times,) except twice in this Epistle, the English version renders *ἀποδοκιμάζω*, *to reject*.

Him not'*—saw not, through the dim crust of the humiliation, the Divine lustre of this Pearl of heaven—could only say, as the result of all its blind gazing and handling: 'He hath no form nor comeliness.' And so He was despised and rejected of men, and His own received Him not, and the very builders lightly esteemed the Rock of their salvation, and the princes of this world in their ignorance crucified the Lord of glory.† Such was the dreadful issue of man's judgment respecting Jesus of Nazareth.

4. And then the Apostle brings into startling contrast with that, as from his discourses you will find he was fond of doing,‡ the very different judgment and acting of God in regard to 'Him whom man despiseth, Him whom the nation abhorreth.'§ '*By men, indeed, rejected*'—let that be granted —'*but chosen of God;*' *with God*, in God's sight, *elect;*‖ what an offset is this to His admitted unpopularity among the ungodly whom He came to save! God, the only wise God, who 'seeth not as man seeth'—He hath chosen the crucified Nazarene. He chose Him in the counsel of eternity, and through the institutions of His grace and by the voice of prophets from the beginning He proclaimed His choice: 'Behold my Servant, whom I uphold; mine Elect, in whom my soul delighteth.'**

If we speak of the ground of this choice, it was no doubt Immanuel's own infinite excellencies, and perfect adaptation of person and character to the work given Him to do. But the point now to be observed is, that, whatever His qualifications, He did not thrust Himself into the mediatorial office. He was chosen to it — chosen by Him who alone had the right to choose, and whose choice, therefore, alone could avail. Even the mocking rulers around the cross well understood, that 'the Christ,' come when He might, would be 'the chosen of God.'†† Jehovah had said to Him: 'I have called Thee in righteousness, and will hold Thine hand, and will keep

* 1 John 3 : 1. † Is. 53 : 2, 3; John 1 : 11; Deut. 32 : 15; 1 Cor. 2 : 8.
‡ See Acts 2 : 23, 24; 3 : 13–15; 4 : 10; 5 : 30, 31; 10 : 39, 40.
§ Is. 49 : 7. ‖ παρὰ δὲ Θεῷ ἐκλεκτόν.
** 1 Sam. 16 : 7; Is. 42 : 1. †† Luke 23 : 35.

Thee, and give Thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles.'* And so, throughout the ages of preparation for setting the Living Stone in its place in the foundation-corner, God, in summoning, as it were, the attendance of all creatures, takes them to witness that the glory of the act He reserved for Himself: '*Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner-stone.*' No hand but that which is Divine—not even the combined strength of angels—was equal to the task. This stone, we may say, was laid in the incarnation, when the lowly Virgin was overshadowed by the power of the Highest; on Jordan's banks, when the heavens were opened, and the Spirit of God descended, 'and lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;' on the mount of the transfiguration, when the same voice was again heard, commanding obedience to the Son; amid the gloom of Calvary, when Jews and Gentiles, with their rulers, were gathered together, 'to do whatsoever God's hand and counsel determined before to be done;' and especially in the resurrection from the dead by the glory of the Father, and exaltation to the Father's throne, when, in the hearing of all heaven, 'Jehovah said unto my Lord: Sit Thou at my right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool.'† Blessed be God, it is securely laid, and 'cannot be removed, but abideth for ever;' and for ever, as the redeemed look on Him who wears 'many crowns,' and once hung on the cross, they will cry one to another, in joyful adoration: 'This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes.'‡

5. When we are further told that the chief corner-stone is laid '*in Zion*,' we seem to be reminded of God's covenants with Israel and with David; that 'salvation is of the Jews,' and that 'Jesus Christ our Lord was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;' that the great decease was accomplished at Jerusalem, and the Gospel first preached there; that the page of prophecy is bright with anticipations of a time, which surely is still to come, when 'the Lord of hosts shall reign in

* Is. 42 : 6.

† Luke 1 : 35; Matt. 3 : 16, 17; 17 : 5; Acts 4 : 27, 28; Rom. 6 : 4; Rev. 3 : 21; Ps. 110 : 1.

‡ Ps. 125 : 1; Rev. 19 : 12; Ps. 118 : 23.

Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously;' and, meanwhile, that the tabernacle pitched by David 'in the city of David, which is Zion,' like the temple which succeeded it, was but the typical forerunner, and, so to speak, the scaffolding of the spiritual house, of which the text treats.*

6. The divine proclamation, moreover, uttered by Isaiah, and quoted here in our sixth verse, pronounces the Living, Elect Stone to be a '*precious*' corner-stone; and it deserves to be noticed that this feature also of the testimony had already in the fourth verse been adopted by the writer as the expression of his own faith and love, just as in the previous chapter he had spoken with rapture of Christ's 'precious blood.' But now all of Christ, His person and His work, is declared to be '*precious;*' precious to God, as being the Son of His love, the brightness of His glory, the Man that is His Fellow, in whom His name is, the Man of His right hand whom He made strong for Himself, the Man after His own heart, the true David, which shall fulfil all His will; precious also to angels, they all worship Him; and precious, oh! how precious, to sin-burdened souls, to weeping sufferers, to dying saints, to saints in glory! †

7. For, in the last place, it is in full view of the myriad necessities and temptations, weaknesses and sorrows, of our ruined race, that the truth of God has vouchsafed us this solemn pledge: '*And he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded;*' or as, retaining still the metaphor of the verse, we might render this clause, *and he that believeth on it*—rests, that is, his faith and hope on the chief corner-stone‡—*shall in no wise be ashamed;*§ ashamed, it is of course meant, of this his confidence. His house, as the gracious Lord Himself assured us, is 'founded upon a rock,'‖ and no storms from

* John 4 : 22; Rom. 1 : 3; Luke 9 : 32; 24 : 47; Is. 24 : 23; 2 Sam. 6 : 12, 17; 2 Chron. 5 : 2.

† Col. 1 : 13, (margin;) Heb. 1 : 3; Zech. 13 : 7; Ex. 23 : 21; Ps. 80 : 17; Acts 13 : 22; Heb. 1 : 6. See p. 115, note 1.

‡ So ἐπ' αὐτῷ (Sin. ἐπ' αὐτόν) has been understood by many, from the Syriac, down to De Wette.

§ οὐ μὴ καταισχυνθῇ. The common version gives this verb as above in chap. 3 : 16, and generally elsewhere; see especially Rom. 9 : 33; 10 : 11—where the same words are cited again and again by Paul.

‖ Matt. 7 : 25.

earth or hell can shake it. To all accusations of Satan and threatenings of the law he replies, 'It is Christ that died.' In the hour of deepest spiritual depression he remembers the word, 'My grace is sufficient for thee.' When beset by outward perplexities of whatever sort, as when daily bread is failing, and the cruse of oil running dry, he is still able to sing with the Psalmist: 'The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want.' And at last he comes to the entrance of the dark valley, and he goes down into it fearing no evil, yea, rather, giving 'thanks to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.'* Nor in any one of these anticipations has any true believer in any single instance ever yet been, or ever shall be, disappointed.

II. We are thus brought to our second topic of discourse, namely, what is here said of *Christians and their relations to the Living Stone and the temple of God.* '*To whom coming . . . ye yourselves also, as living*'—not *lively;* for it is the same word as in the preceding verse, and our English variation is altogether unfortunate†—'*as living stones, are builded a spiritual house.*'‡

What a scene of holy activities! and how amazing the result! These stones but yesterday lay sunk in nature's quarry, far down in 'the hole of the pit,'§ or scattered over the waste places of the wilderness, all alike obscure, shapeless, dead, disunited, valueless. Behold them now, swayed by a stronger and more miraculous influence than that of the fabled Orpheus, moving to their common centre of attraction, living stones—instinct with the very life of that Divine Magnet; Christ living in them‖—each several stone polished after the similitude of a palace,** and gleaming with inward and reflected light, while all, as they successively gather round the one Foundation, are by the Heavenly Architect ranged thereon in their appropriate places, and so builded into mutual coöpera-

* Rom. 8 : 34; 2 Cor. 12 : 9; Ps. 23 : 1, 4; 1 Cor. 15 : 57.

† Compare p. 28.

‡ *καὶ αὐτοὶ ὡς λίθοι ζῶντες οἰκοδομεῖσθε* (Sin. A², C, *ἐποικοδομεῖσθε οἶκος πνευματικὸς*, (Sin. *πνεύματος.*)

§ Is. 51 : 1. ‖ Gal. 2 : 20. ** Ps. 144 : 12.

tion and a holy unity—'*a Spiritual House*'—quickened and bound together in all its parts by the one all-pervading Spirit of Christ—a Living Temple, wherein God dwells, and which for ever shall resound His praise. 'Jesus Christ,' says Paul in that passage to which I have once before referred, (Eph 2 : 20–22,) 'being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord : in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit.'

Let me here ask you to note, in passing, that the apostolic representation before us is not more vividly graphic as a description, than it is doctrinally instructive in regard to the respective shares of God and man in the work of the Church's edification. The coming to the Lord—or, as the phrase* implies, *coming close up to Him*—of v. 4 is plainly equivalent to the believing on Him of v. 6, and both expressions import the voluntary act or acting of an awakened, living soul. But, as the natural condition of every soul is that of death in sin, and faith is the gift of God, no man coming to Christ except the Father draw him, these '*living stones*' must be understood to have undergone a previous operation of divine grace. Nor does that alone suffice. Even then they are not left to themselves. But, ever after their first coming, the same sovereign wisdom and love and power preside over their adjustment and growth. How beautifully again does all this accord with the philosophy of that sacred exhortation : 'Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling : for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.' So that in both senses of the word—as Himself erecting this Temple, and as owning it—it may properly be said to the Church, 'Ye are God's building.'†

Many,‡ indeed, prefer the construction of our English

* πρὸς ὃν προσερχόμενοι.

† Eph. 2 : 1, 8; John 6 : 44; Phil. 2 : 12, 13; 1 Cor. : 3 : 9.

‡ Of the older versions especially; also Hammond, Carpzov, De Wette, Peile, Alford, Huther, who refers to the hortative character of the entire section. But the section includes vs. 7–10, and these are evidently descriptive. Nor is there more force in the special reference of some to the structure of vs. 1, 2—an imperative mood preceded by its participle.

margin, '*Be ye built*,' or, as others,* '*Build yourselves*;' but with no real advantage in either case. The writer, having just assumed as facts (vs. 2, 3) the regeneration and partial Christian experience of those addressed, may very well be supposed to be here reminding them doctrinally, that the growth, at which he had also urged them to aim, depended far less on any independent efforts of their own in the use of even the best external means, than on their continual resort through the means to the good Lord Himself—on their maintaining an abiding, living connection with the Divine foundation—or, according to that other figure in the Epistle to the Colossians, (2 : 19,) on their 'holding the Head.' For in the whole passage, as I conceive, he is thinking, not merely or mainly of the soul's first contact with the Saviour in the hour of its regeneration, but rather of its ever closer approximations, and growing intimacy of intercourse, in the exercises of an habitual faith.† '*To whom coming . . . ye are builded*.' In both these things there is, or ought to be, a process and steady advance. But the former of itself secures the latter, and is indispensable to it, the believing fellowship of the Church with the Lord being the sole condition of its edification. If the one is constant and uninterrupted, so is the other. And in proportion to the loving earnestness of the one will be the rapidity and effectiveness of the other. The spiritual life is thus strengthened. The living stones, in union with the Chief Corner-Stone, 'are changed into the same image from glory to glory,' until the House of God, throughout its entire mass, and to its uttermost turret and pinnacle, glows and shines 'in the beauties of holiness.'‡

I must now very briefly call your attention, before closing, to the example we have in the fifth verse of what is called a mixture of metaphors. Of this offense against the rules of a scholastic rhetoric the inspired writers in general manifest

* Luther, Wakefield, Steiger, etc.

† This meets Alford's objection, that on our view 'the present participle προσερχόμενοι could hardly have been used, but it would surely have been προσελθόντες.'

‡ 2 Cor. 3 : 18; Psalm 110 : 3.

no dread whatever, in their zeal to bring out the variety and fulness of Divine truth. Accordingly, as Christ Himself is set forth in Scripture as at once the Way, and the Door, and the Foundation, and the Temple, and the Altar, and the Sacrifice, and the High-Priest,* so here Peter, while describing believers as being 'builded' on Christ 'a spiritual house,' deems no apology required for immediately adding in the same breath: '*a holy priesthood,*† *to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God*‡ *through*§ *Jesus Christ.*'

Here also you will notice the organic unity of all the faithful. Widely as they are dispersed in time and place, they do all constitute but one temple, and one '*priesthood.*' And that priesthood is '*holy*'—not only separated by their office to a holy function, but through the 'washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost,' fitted for the due discharge of that function. Being priests, moreover, 'it is of necessity that' they 'have somewhat also to offer.' And, since all bloody sacrifices have been for ever superseded by 'the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all,' what remains for those also who in this way have already 'received the atonement,' but that they offer themselves—their spirits, and souls, and bodies, with all their faculties and opportunities—a thank-offering, living, spiritual sacrifices, 'which is their reasonable service.'‖ And how great a thing is it to be certified beforehand that these sacrifices of ours, such as they are—that aught we can bring to the altar, be it all we are, and all we have—will be '*acceptable to God*'! Well was it for the Apostle to add, '*through Jesus Christ.*'** That was needed to

* John 14 : 6; 10 : 9; 1 Cor. 3 : 11; John 2 : 21; Heb. 13 : 10; Eph. 5 : 2; Heb. 8 : 1, etc.

† Before *ἱεράτευμα*, (a word found in the New Testament only here and at v. 9,) Lachmann, Theile, Alford, insert *εἰς*, (Sin. A, B, C, Origen, etc.)

‡ Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford, cancel *τῷ* before *Θεῷ* (after Sin. A, B, C.—Sin. omits *πνευματικὰς* before *θυσίας*.)

§ As in ch. 1 : 21. See p. 79.

‖ Titus 3 : 5; Heb. 8 : 3; 10 : 10; Rom. 5 : 11; 12 : 1.

** The immediate connection of these words with *to offer*'—(as in Heb. 13 : 15. Bede here even goes as far back as '*ye are builded*')—is allowed by Calvin, Horneius, Brown, Huther, and preferred by Benson, Stolz, De Wette, Alford, and others. But the common construction is the more obvious, and that the priestly

justify our confidence, even while it deepens humility, and represses all glorying in the flesh. As our standing as priests in God's temple, and our ability and right to offer up spiritual sacrifices there, come to us only through Jesus Christ, the same thing holds true no less of God's acceptance both of our persons and our services ; even as the plate of pure gold, with its inscriptions 'like the engravings of a signet, *Holiness to the Lord*,' was to 'be upon Aaron's forehead, that Aaron might bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel should hallow in all their holy gifts ; and it was to be always upon his forehead, that they might be accepted before the Lord.'* Majestic type of the more glorious reality! All unholy and defiled as we are, we behold our Great High-Priest ministering afar on our behalf in the heavenly sanctuary, and, taking courage from the sight, we too 'come boldly unto the throne,' saying: 'By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.'†

Ask yourselves, dear readers, whether this be the spirit of your daily life. Only in the proportion that it is, is your life a Christian one, and you yourselves entitled to put on the garments of this holy priesthood. Or, reverting to the other figure of the text, let me solemnly caution you in the words of one whom I love to quote—I mean the blessed Leighton: 'Think it not enough that you know this Stone is laid, but see whether you are built on it by faith. The multitude of imaginary believers lie round about it, but they are never the better nor the surer for that, any more than stones that lie loose in heaps near unto a foundation, but are not joined unto it. There is no benefit to us by Christ, without union with Him.'

work of Christians is performed in and through Christ is already sufficiently implied in what precedes.

* Ex. 28 : 36, 38.

† Heb. 8 : 1; 4 : 16; 13 : 15.

Lecture XI.

1 *Peter* 2 : 7–10.

'Unto you therefore which believe He is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light: which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.'

In the preceding verse the writer, who had been speaking of the Lord Jesus as the living, divinely chosen, precious, chief corner-stone of the Church, confirms this apostolic judgment by quoting from prophecy God's own testimony to the same effect—accompanied, as that testimony was, with a solemn guarantee of the infallible safety and triumph of all who through faith build on this sure foundation.

Now, as a direct inference from this, comes the passage before us; in which, by an appeal to actual experience, are contrasted the relations, and the very diverse results flowing from the relations, which Christ sustains respectively to believers and unbelievers.

'*Unto you therefore which believe* He is *precious*.' Both the form and the idea of the original would be more distinctly represented, if we should say, '*For you, then*, is *the preciousness*'—the preciousness already twice referred to as inherent in the Saviour's person and work; '*For you, then*,' according to that declaration of God, which I have just cited from Isaiah

—'*for you, then,* is *the preciousness, who believe.*'* The main emphasis, you perceive, is on the last word, the writer's aim being to bring into prominence this one great truth, that, as faith alone discerns the glory of the Saviour, so it is believers and believers only, that can claim a personal interest in all that, by God's appointment, the Saviour is, and has. The excellence of the foundation is for—belongs to—the building that rests on it. And so whatever gives Christ value, so to speak, in the sight of God and angels—as the union in Him of the glories and virtues of the two natures, Divine and human ; His filial zeal, and perfect obedience, and efficacious atonement, and priestly intercession, and royal might and majesty—all, all redounds to the honor and blessing of 'them that are Christ's'† through faith in His name. Faith it is that establishes free and open communication between the barrenness and desolations of earth and the kindly, inexhaustible influences of heaven. It is that secret, silent, expectant contact of the perishing soul with the Saviour, which never yet failed to draw forth His healing power.

Far otherwise is it with the unsympathizing, obdurate, self-satisfied crowd around. Mark what here follows: '*But unto them which be disobedient*'—or, *for such as disobey*‡—'*the stone*§ *which the builders disallowed*'—or *rejected*‖—'*the same hath become*** *the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence.*'

* *ὑμῖν οὖν ἡ τιμὴ τοῖς πιστεύουσιν.* The construction of *ἡ τιμὴ* as a predicate was adopted in our version, through the older Protestant English versions, from Erasmus, Luther, Calvin. Many who follow it conform more or less to our marginal rendering, 'He is *an honor.*' But this also obscures the obvious reference of the Greek article to *ἔντιμος.* If, as some do, we translate the adjective here and v. 4 by *honored, honorable,* the present clause would stand thus: '*For you, then,* is *the honor,* etc.' And this, no doubt, would be rather more agreeable to the current Greek usage. But, on the other hand, in Is. 28 : 16, (the place referred to,) Ps. 72 : 14, and often elsewhere, *ἔντιμος* is the Septuagint for יָקָר and its cognates.

† 1 Cor. 15 : 23.

‡ *ἀπειθοῦσιν,* (Sin., *ἀπιστοῦσιν.*)

§ Lachmann and Alford read *λίθος.*

‖ The same word as in v. 4.

** *ἐγενήθη εἰς.* See the English version at Ps. 118 : 22, and in the other New Testament citations of this text, Matt. 21 : 42 ; Mark 12 : 10 ; Luke 20 : 17 ; Acts 4 : 11.

In the first chapter our Apostle had once and again characterized faith as *obedience*—*obedience to the truth*, and believers themselves had been spoken of as *children of obedience*, (vs. 2, 14, 22.) On the same principle unbelievers are now distinguished as '*such as disobey*.' In other words, as the saving faith of the Gospel is not any cold assent of the understanding to the truth of a statement, whether historical or doctrinal, but the cordial submission of the whole soul to the Divine authority and grace, as these are revealed in the face of Jesus Christ, so neither is unbelief any accidental, morally indifferent lack of such an intellectual assent, but the soul's active resistance, with all its powers of thought and feeling to that same gracious authority. On this point men very commonly deceive themselves. They are apt to fancy that they cannot be held seriously responsible for their mere want of faith, inasmuch as this may be accounted for in one or other of several ways, without in any case at all impeaching their personal integrity. Either their minds are so constituted—they are so cautious, or they are so acute—that they find it impossible for them to yield to evidence that readily satisfies more hasty or less sagacious spirits. Or, on the other hand, they are so humble, and have so little learning, that they cannot understand these things. Or else, taking you on the ground of your own orthodoxy, they will even lament that they have not yet been favored with that supernatural illumination, without which, you say, a man 'seeing shall see, and shall not perceive.'*

Such excuses, brethren, may be ever so dexterous and plausible; but the word of God, that word which is to judge the secrets of men at the last day,† deals quite summarily and very sternly with them all. Need I tell you, whose are those solemn sayings: 'He that believeth not shall be damned;' 'He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God'?‡ Not only does the weight of all his other sins still abide upon him. There is now added to them the new, and

* Matt. 13 : 14. † John 12 : 48; Rom. 2 : 16.
‡ Mark 16 : 16; John 3 : 18.

heavier, and fatal guilt of unbelief in a revealed and offered Saviour. Such an offer from the hand of God cannot be innocently refused. It is the last and highest manifestation of the Divine love—a love so great, that, to secure the sinner's acceptance of the unspeakable gift, it concentrates on the offer all the tenderness of invitation and entreaty, together with all the force of command, and the extreme sanctions of law. Can you wonder that, by Him who 'knows what is in man,'* the sinner's refusal is charged to the inveterate alienation of his heart from truth and holiness? There is involved in it, together with the darkest ingratitude of which any creature can be guilty, the very climax and consummation of the original rebellion itself.

And you are now to observe, that the retribution is answerable to the offense. '*For such as disobey, the stone which the builders*'—the priests and rulers of Israel, they who by their calling and profession were the most strongly bound to exercise a wise and righteous judgment—the stone which they '*rejected*,' as not worthy of a place in the temple, '*the same*'—so little do the ignorance, the malice, and the wrath of men avail against the counsels of heaven—'*the same hath become the head of the corner*'—the chief foundation-stone. God thus returned into their own bosom the contempt which they had poured upon His Son, and 'their folly was manifest unto all.'† But their case is here referred to for the sake of teaching us this lesson, that the sin of unbelief—disobedience to the Gospel—puts men into the same class with those who 'crucified the Lord of glory,'‡ and that the bitter shame and horror of the latter at the unexpected result are the fit recompense also of the former.

Nor is surprise, and disappointment, and confusion of face the whole of the penalty. The exaltation of Christ, while it for ever removes Him far beyond the reach of His enemies, as certainly involves them in 'destruction and perdition.'§ Having described the one result by a figure taken from the 118th Psalm, and already employed for the same purpose by

* John 2 : 25. † 2 Tim. 3 : 9. ‡ 1 Cor. 2 : 8. § 1 Tim. 6 : 9.

the Lord Himself,* the Apostle, with that deep, constant sense of the Saviour's divinity that pervades the New Testament, applies to the other result the very language in which it was announced to Isaiah, that Jehovah of hosts, the Sanctuary of refuge for the faithful in Israel, would yet 'be for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence'† to the ungodly mass of the nation. The same calamity, says Peter, is common to all who disobey. For them the choicest gifts of God are turned into curses. 'Their table is made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling-block, and a recompense unto them.' The 'savor of life unto life' is found to be no less 'a savor of death unto death.' Whatever in Christ is most precious to faith—even His peace-speaking blood itself—is but an aggravation of the doom of those who reject Him. They refuse to build on God's foundation, and so, amidst all their wilful, vain activities, that foundation stands ever in the way, '*a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence*,' and they 'stumble, and fall, and are broken, and snared, and taken.' 'Whosoever,' said Jesus, 'shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.'‡ Such is the only possible issue of unbelief's present dealing with the Saviour, and of the Saviour's ultimate, judicial dealing with unbelief.

For, miserable as this fate is, it is no worse, the Apostle intimates, than what might be expected to follow the sin. '*Who stumble at the word*,' he reiterates with mingled amazement and sorrow, '*being disobedient;*' or, according to an old and better, as it is now the commonly received, construction of the clause: '*who stumble, disobeying the word*.'§ That is to say, the connection between disobedience to the word and

* Matt. 21 : 42; Luke 20 : 17. † Is. 8 : 14.

‡ Rom. 11 : 9, (Ps. 69 : 22;) 2 Cor. 2 : 16; Is. 8 : 15; Matt. 21 : 44, (Luke 20 : 18.)

§ *οἱ προσκόπτουσιν τῷ λόγῳ ἀπειθοῦντες.* The noun is construed as above with the participle, (comp. ch. 3 : 1 and 4 : 17,) by the Syriac, Beza, Benson, Bengel, De Wette, Huther, Wiesinger, Alford, and many others. Not a few begin a new sentence with this clause, and then treat *οἱ* either as a demonstrative, *These stumble*, etc., or as a compound relative, with the copula supplied to the participle, *They who stumble are disobedient*, etc. I prefer the simpler reference of *οἱ* as a relative to *ἀπειθοῦσι* of v. 7.

collision with the Rock, Christ, therein revealed, is one so direct and immediate, that the two things are simultaneous, and may be regarded as identical. Or, if we still choose to consider the stumbling as the penal consequence of the disobedience, it is then implied, that in no case is it possible to incur the guilt without suffering that very penalty. Let a man trifle with the Gospel, and on whatsoever pretext refuse to it the obedience of faith, and he thereby clashes himself in hostile, ruinous encounter against the Lord Christ Himself.

But what is meant, when it is so sternly added, '*whereunto also they were appointed*'? Of the very many explanations, possible and impossible, that have been given of this clause,* three only are of much account. The question being, *Unto what* were they also appointed—appointed by God ?†—the answer may be either, They were appointed to disobedience ;‡ or, They were appointed to stumbling as the consequence and punishment of disobedience ;§ or, The appointment included both the disobedience and the stumbling.‖ It is in favor of this third view, that either of the others makes a more marked and formal distinction between the disobedience and the stumbling, than is perhaps warranted by the tone and structure of the entire passage. And as for the difficulty which it may be supposed to involve, as bringing even the

* Thus I. the ὅ has been taken with the force of *that which*, and so attached, 1. to ἀπειθοῦντες, *believe not in that whereon they were*, or *are, set*, or, *into which they were instructed*, or *appointed*, (so, with sundry other slight variations, Luther, Erasmus, Castalio, Vatablus, Tyndale, Cranmer, Newcome ;) or 2. to προσκόπτουσιν, *stumble at the thing for which they were laid*, (Thomson, *The New Covenant Translated*, Philadelphia, 1808.) II. As a simple relative, ὅ = *which* has been referred, 1. to the idea of *believing* as suggested by ἀπειθοῦντες, (Bede, Corn. a Lapide, Zeger. Calvin also thinks this allowable ;) 2. to λόγῳ, in spite of the gender, (Jachmann, Sharpe ;) and 3. in spite of the distance, to βῆμα of ch. 1 : 25, (Carpzov, Augusti ;) besides the references explained above. Comp. p. 496, note ‡.

† For surely there is no thought here of Satan and innate depravity, (Aretius,) or of inveterate Jewish prejudices, (Hottinger.)

‡ Calvin prefers this.

§ Grotius, Hammond, Whitby, Benson, Bengel, Macknight, Burton, Steiger, Brown, Huther, and many others.

‖ Estius, Horneius, Cocceius, Leighton, Gill, Pott, Grashof, De Wette, Wiesinger.

sins of men within the range of the Divine counsels, we need not give ourselves any concern about that. It is just the difficulty which, as growing out of the relations between the sovereign God and the dependent creature, besets all our poor speculations about 'eternal Providence,' and certainly meets us no less frequently and nakedly in Scripture. The inspired writers, however, are very little troubled by it. For the most part, they seem scarcely conscious of its existence. Hence the frank simplicity with which they everywhere speak of God as hardening men's hearts—causing them to err from His ways—giving them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear—turning their hearts to hate His people—raising up Pharaoh for the very purpose of showing His power in him—bidding Shimei curse David—moving David to number the people—and so forth.* Not that in any instance the Holy One can be thought of as the Author of sin by any direct, positive agency of His own. But as little must we shrink from asserting it to be one of the most ordinary methods of His righteous administration, to punish sin by the judicial abandonment of the sinner to the unchecked impulses of his depraved nature.

On the strength of this familiar principle, then, we need not hesitate to adopt the wider and more obvious interpretation of the text, as if it were said: Unto which disobedience and stumbling at that stumbling-stone,† not only have they now wilfully committed themselves, but '*they were also appointed*' of old. Easy as it may be to cavil at such a statement, there cannot be a reasonable question, that it is altogether a Scriptural one—one, therefore, at which interpreters, in the judgment even of one of the most accomplished rationalists of Germany, had no occasion, as he says, to get frightened, and fly off to ungrammatical or illogical explanations.‡ Meanwhile it remains true enough, that—to use the words of

* Ex. 4 : 21; 7 : 13; Deut. 2 : 30; 2 Sam. 16 : 10; 24 : 1; Is. 29 : 10; 63 : 17; Rom. 9 : 17, 18; 11 : 8, etc.

† Rom. 9 : 32.

‡ De Wette: 'Vor diesem biblischen Gedanken, (vgl. Röm. 9 : 21 f.,) hätten die Ausll. nicht erschrecken und zu ungrammatischen oder unlogischen Erklärungen ihre Zuflucht nehmen sollen.'

our own good Archbishop*—'here it were easier to lead you into a deep, than to lead you forth again. I will rather stand on the shore, and silently admire, than enter into it. This is certain, that the thoughts of God are all not less just in themselves, than deep and unsoundable by us. His justice appears clear, in that man's destruction is always the fruit of his own sin. But to give causes of God's decrees without Himself is neither agreeable with the primitive being of the nature of God, nor with the doctrine of the Scriptures. This is sure, that God is not bound to give us further account of these things, and we are bound not to ask it. Let these two words, as St. Augustine says, answer all, "What art thou, O man?" and, "Oh! the depth!"'

Having, by this passing glance at the sin and doom of the impenitent, confirmed what he had been saying of the necessity and value of faith, the Apostle quickly and joyfully reverts to the happier illustration of the same theme, that was presented in the high standing and calling of those who, as believers, knew by experience '*the preciousness*' of Christ. Behold again the proof—as if he had said—in your own case. See what Christ's 'name, through faith in His name,'† has done for you. '*But ye*'—as for you, you in contrast with these unbelievers ‡—'*ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light.*'§ What a cluster of illustrious decorations! badges of a new and heavenly nobility, brighter than ever shone on king or emperor! These same things, indeed, Peter well knew, had been often spoken of the national Israel. But, Israel having proved unfaithful, and having so forfeited all the promises of the Mosaic covenant, the Apostle of the circumcision himself transfers them all to the New Testament Church. Let us briefly review the resplendent insignia.

'*Ye* are *a chosen generation*' or *race*,‖ sprung from the same

* Leighton. † Acts 3 : 16. ‡ *ὑμεῖς δέ.*
§ Ex. 19 : 5, 6; Deut. 7 : 6; 14 : 2; Is. 43 : 20, 21, etc.
‖ *γένος*, (nowhere else rendered *generation.*)

Original, partaking of a common life, and though now, like your Lord, despised and rejected of men, like Him also, *elect* * of God from the beginning, appointed not to wrath, but to the obtaining of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ ;† '*a royal* ‡ *priesthood*,' a kingdom of priests, kings and priests unto God, priests upon thrones, sharers in Christ's own Melchisedec priesthood, mediators for all purposes of rule and blessing between God and the universe ;§ '*a holy nation*,' a commonwealth of saints ; '*a peculiar people*,' or, as the original phrase more strictly is, *a people for a possession*.‖ That, however, is really what our translators meant by '*a peculiar people*'**—to wit, a people whom God owns as His peculium, His special property, for His own exclusive use. And you cannot but be aware that this idea, like all the rest, is one eminently Jewish. The oft-repeated promise of God was that obedient Israel should be to Him in this sense a peculiar people—a special treasure above all people, and in the faith of that promise the dying Moses sang : 'The Lord's portion is His people ; Jacob is the lot of His inheritance.' Now, this prerogative also has passed over, with the others, from the rebellious Jew to the Christian Church, and to her—without at all prejudicing the reversionary interests of repentant and restored Jerusalem—may most fitly be addressed the words of the prophet : 'Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.'††

* *ἐκλεκτὸν*, as in v. 6 ; ch. 1 : 2, etc.

† Is. 53 : 3 ; 1 Thess. 5 : 9.

‡ *βασίλειον*—in the New Testament, found only here.

§ Ex. 19 : 6 ; Zech. 6 : 13 ; Heb. 6 : 20 ; 7 : 15–17 ; Rev. 1 : 6 ; 5 : 10.

‖ *λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν*. Compare the use of this last word and its verb in Acts 20 : 28 ; 1 Tim. 3 : 13 ; Eph. 1 : 14 ; 1 Thess. 5 : 9 ; 2 Thess. 2 : 14 ; Heb. 10 : 39.

** Our translators followed Tyndale, the Geneva, and the Bishops' Bibles in transferring to this place and Tit. 2 : 14 (*λαὸν περιούσιον*) the Vulgate rendering of עַם סְגֻלָּה, *populus peculiaris* ; the simple סְגֻלָּה of Ex. 19 : 5 and Mal. 3 : 17 being given in the Vulgate by *in peculium*. In the latter place, which might properly be rendered thus, 'They shall be to me, saith Jehovah of hosts, in the day that I create a possession,' the Septuagint employs the very phrase of our text, *εἰς περιποίησιν*.

†† Ex. 19 : 5 ; Deut. 4 : 20 ; 7 : 6 ; 14 : 2, etc. ; Deut. 32 : 9 ; Is. 62 : 3.

Accordingly, if the question be, For what purpose are all these lofty titles and privileges concentrated on believers? the answer is, Not merely, nor mainly, for their personal gratification or their corporate glory, but, in the words of our Apostle, '*that ye should show forth the praises*'—or, taking the more literal marginal rendering, *that ye may publish the virtues*, or *excellencies**—'*of Him who called you*'—by the preaching of the word, and by the effectual working of His Spirit—'*out of darkness*'—the darkness of ignorance and sin and death, the darkness of Satan's kingdom—'*into His marvellous light*'—the light of life, of truth, of hope, of holiness, of joy—the light of grace and of glory—the light of God—*His* light. Truly, this is what Isaiah called it, when he foresaw its dawning—'a great light'† in a dark world; what Peter, looking on its risen splendors, here calls it *wondrous*,‡ amazing, *light;* wondrous in its source, in its constitution, in its efficacy. As it was in the beginning, so is it now in the new creation: it shines out of darkness at the voice of God.§

Now, the text assumes that in the work of saving men by Jesus Christ there is a display made of the Divine attributes or perfections; and believers are reminded that their grand business in life—the ultimate design of the existence and organization of the Church—is to glorify God by letting this light shine in all their walk and conversation. To do so is even now the highest duty of all Christians, as such. It will be no less their supreme ambition and delight throughout eternity. 'This people,' saith God, 'I have formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise.'‖

In the 10th verse we have a beautiful summing up of the whole matter, as it regards the contrast between the present

* *τὰς ἀρετὰς ἐξαγγείλητε* [the only instance of this verb in the N. T.] *τοῦ . . . καλέσαντος*, (see ch. 1 : 15, p. 67.) By *ἀρεταί* the Septuagint repeatedly renders תְּהִלּוֹת, (see especially the ground-text of the present passage, Is. 43 : 21;) and this fact, together with the Syriac interpretation, may have led our translators to deviate in this instance from all the older English versions, which have *virtues*. This term, which is retained in the margin of the common version, is now popularly used only for *moral* excellencies, which are not here exclusively intended. Comp. 2 Pet. 1 : 3, p. 363.

† Is. 9 : 2. ‡ *θαυμαστὸν*. § 2 Cor. 4 : 6. ‖ Is. 43 : 21.

and former condition of the believers, and in respect also of the real cause of the blessed change: 'Who *once** were *not a people, but now are the people of God; who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.*'

In such terms as these had the prophet Hosea (1 : 6, 9; 2 : 23) described the yet future restoration of Israel to the favor of God, after the present long period of rejection and desolation. They are applied by Peter, as likewise by Paul,† to the churches of their day, composed, as these were to a large extent, of the Gentile element. Israel's God had thus already begun to fulfil His ancient threatening: 'They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.'‡

Instead, therefore, of understanding, as very many do, the first division of the verse thus: '*Who once* were *not the people of God, but now* are *the people of God*,' we shall do better, I think, to interpret in this way; that, so long as they were not God's people, 'they were so base and miserable as not to be worthy of the name of a people at all'§—they were not even a people, so far from being God's people;‖ but now they had been lifted out of that state of ignominious depression and nameless obscurity; lifted so high as to have become not merely a people, but the people of God—belonging to Him and acknowledged by Him, and He was their God. Their present elevation was as signal, as their former position had been degraded.

And then it is added, as a simple and sufficient explanation of both: '*Who had not obtained*'—or rather, *received*—'*mercy, but now have received mercy;*'** received it, when ye were not

* *οἱ ποτέ.* † Rom. 9 : 25, 26. ‡ Deut. 32 : 21. § Leighton.

‖ Bengel: 'Ne populus quidem, nedum Dei populus.' De Wette: 'A people that does not deserve the name, because destitute of all true peoplehood, *(Volksthum,)* the true knowledge of God.' In this remark, however, there is, perhaps, as Wiesinger objects, something of a too modern cast; though Wiesinger also concurs in translating *οὐ λαὸς* by *kein Volk=no people, ein Nicht-Volk=a no-people.*

** As in 2 Cor. 4 : 1. So Beza changes the *consecuti misericordiam* of other versions and of his own earlier editions into *donati misericordia.* See also the Syriac.—Let the student note the change of participles, *ἠλεημένοι . . . ἐλεηθέντες.* 'Who once' [for the *ποτέ* belongs also to the second negative] '*were in the con-*

expecting it, nor seeking for it; without efforts of your own. God 'was found of them that sought Him not; He was made manifest unto them that asked not after Him.'* In all the innumerable multitude of the redeemed there is not one soul whose spiritual history, at the turning-point of its destiny, is not given in these humbling, gracious words: 'None eye pitied thee . . . to have compassion upon thee; but thou wast cast out in the open field to the loathing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born. And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live.'† And as this is God's account of the transaction, so is it also that of the redeemed themselves. 'While we were yet sinners,' they all say, 'Christ died for us. . . . When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son. . . . So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.'‡ Once and again does Paul comprise the whole story of his own conversion in that one word, 'I obtained mercy.'§

We cannot now dwell on the inferences that might be drawn from what has been said. But already, as we passed along in the exposition, you must have seen what ample material these verses furnish for reflection on the inexcusableness and ruinousness of unbelief—on the value of faith, as that whereby the chief of sinners is introduced to the enjoyment of the fulness of Christ—on the consequent dignity of true Christians—and the infinite obligations that rest on them, 'whether they eat, or drink, or whatsoever they do, to do all to the glory of God.'‖

dition of those that have not received mercy; but, now, ye did receive mercy'—the great fact in your history. What was true πoτέ, *continued true down to the point of transition from* πoτέ *to* νῦν. Comp. ch. 1 : 12, (p. 51,) and the aorists of 2 Cor. 4 : 1 and 1 Tim. 1 : 13, 16.

* Rom. 10 : 20. † Ez. 16 : 5, 6. ‡ Rom. 5 : 8, 10; 9 : 16.
§ 1 Tim. 1 : 13, 16; 2 Cor. 4 : 1. ‖ 1 Cor. 10 : 31.

Lecture XII.

1 *PETER* 2 : 11, 12.

'DEARLY beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul ; having your conversation honest among the Gentiles : that, whereas they speak against you as evil-doers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.'

HITHERTO the Epistle has been mainly occupied with general exhortations addressed to Christians as such, and enforced by a consideration of the spiritual and heavenly privileges common to them all. Much the larger portion of what remains is taken up chiefly with the special duties growing out of their various relations in the life that now is.

The first of these relations that is brought into view is that which the suffering saints sustained to the unbelieving world and its rulers ; and this section may be said to be introduced, as well as connected with what precedes, by the verses now before us, in which the motives to a pure and blameless walk, such as had been described, are drawn as well from the present pilgrim state of the children of God, as from a regard to their own safety, and to God's glory in the possible repentance and conversion of their heathen defamers.

The earnestness of the writer is seen in the tender solemnity of his address: '*Dearly beloved, I beseech* you'—or simply, *Beloved, I exhort* * you. A similar affectionateness of tone marks the commencement of a new topic also at ch. 4 : 12. It is an expression of the Apostle's sense of the importance of the exhortation itself, while at the same time it

* Ἀγαπητοὶ, παρακαλῶ. The common version of Peter's Epistles translates ἀγαπ. as above in all the other (7) instances.

tends to conciliate confidence, and win obedience. 'What I am going to say of the restraints and severities of the Christian discipline and calling, I am impelled to say by my love for you, knowing as I do that your real happiness both here and hereafter is involved in the matter.'

In the present case the warning is against indulgence in '*fleshly lusts*,' or 'the lusts of the flesh,' as they are called in our Second Epistle, (2 : 18,) and by Paul in writing to the Ephesians, (2 : 3.) The phrase strictly includes all the irregular, inordinate desires of 'the carnal' or fleshly, 'mind.'* Prominent, no doubt, among these is that 'lust of uncleanness,'† which in the apostolic age deluged the empire with pollution, and turned the gorgeous palaces of the Cæsars into sties of indescribable abominations. So familiar, indeed, had the popular mind become with all forms of unchastity the most revolting, as practised generally in society of every rank, and as imputed to the gods themselves, that neither the reason nor the conscience of the time was any longer offended by it.

Bearing in mind this state of things, we can understand the frequency and sternness, with which Christ's Apostles continually and everywhere denounced this class of offences, as not once to be named among saints, and strove anxiously to guard the churches from relapsing into that 'corruption of the world through lust,' from which they had but just escaped.‡ For the same reason it may well be supposed, that Peter here had a special reference to the fetid and copious fountain in our depraved nature, out of which proceed these foul streams of adulteries, fornications, and all lasciviousness. In the spirit, moreover, of a true Christian reformer, it is to the healing of the fountain, that he first directly applies himself.

But, as I have already intimated, the phrase, '*fleshly lusts*,' need not be thus limited. It can just as well include the 'divers lusts and pleasures,' to which the natural man is a slave —all 'worldly lusts,'§ to use another expression of Paul; that is, all lusts, or strong desires, that seek their gratification in the things of this world, and by which the world itself is

* Rom. 8 : 7 (*τὸ φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς.* † 2 Pet. 2 : 10.
‡ Eph. 5 : 3; 2 Pet. 1 : 4.
§ Tit. 3 : 3, (*δουλεύοντες ἐπιθυμίαις καὶ ἡδοναῖς ποικίλαις*;) 2 : 12.

swayed in its movements and aims—'the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life,' according to the enumeration of yet another Apostle*—'the world's accursed trinity.'† When Paul, therefore, undertakes in one place to give a catalogue of 'the works of the flesh,' he begins with 'adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,' but immediately adds 'idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like.' And so elsewhere, when urging his brethren to 'make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof,' he specifies 'rioting and drunkenness, chambering and wantonness, strife and envying.'‡

From '*fleshly lusts*,' then, of whatever sort—from those intemperate desires after earthly things, which spring from the flesh, or man's corrupt nature, and in so far as they partake of that corruption—from any such 'love of the world, or of the things that are in the world'§—believers are exhorted '*to abstain*'—*to hold themselves off from*,‖ as from the touch of defilement, or the breath of the pestilence.

And, as they could be expected to do this only in the strength of the new life and hope which they had received from above, the exhortation is addressed to them as '*strangers and pilgrims*.' Being the children of God, Peter would have them ever feel that they were from home—*foreigners***—among those who knew not their Father. It was well also to

* 1 John 2 : 16. † Leighton.

‡ Gal. 5 : 19–21; Rom. 13 : 13, 14.

§ 1 John 2 : 15.

‖ *ἀπέχεσθαι*—as in the parallel 1 Thess. 4 : 3. Here, as there, Lachmann adds, but on very slender authority, *ὑμᾶς*, (not *ὑμεῖς*, as Bloomfield says; strangely adding, 'which it'—the received text—'requires.')—Some (Erasmus, Bengel, Tischendorf, Theile, Bloomfield latterly) read, with Huther's approbation, *ἀπέχεσθε*, after many MSS., including the three uncials, A, C, G. And this reading—which, however, may have been only an emendation to suit the *ἔχοντες* of v. 12—our translators seem to have adopted from Erasmus and the Aldine edition, or they may have simply retained what they found in the older Protestant versions. At least, there is no necessity for regarding *ἀπέχεσθαι* as an instance of the infinitive used imperatively.

** As in Eph. 2 : 19; where *πάροικοι* is joined with *ξένοι*, to which latter term *strange* or *stranger* is always (except Rom. 16 : 23, *host*) appropriated in the common version.

remind them, that here they were but *sojourners**—wayfaring men that tarried for a night, 'having no continuing city' in the wilderness through which lay their pilgrimage.† How great the inconsistency and the shame, if during their alien and transient residence they should allow themselves to be so 'entangled in the affairs of this life,' as to arrest, or even delay, their Zion-ward progress; if, having tasted of the heavenly gift, the good word of God, and the kindness of the Lord, they should still retain their old keenness of relish for sinful delights—the flesh-pots of the house of bondage; if the chosen generation, the holy nation, the peculiar people, practically disowning their high calling, should continue to live as do others, and soil the vestments of the royal priesthood by 'embracing dunghills!'‡ What if the angels that came to Sodom at even, forgetting their own holy associations and divine mission, had rather conceived feelings of sympathy with the doomed city's guilty revelry? A like incongruity there is between the existence of fleshly lusts even in the heart of a Christian, and his claim of citizenship in the better country, or his brief pilgrim relations while on the way thither. And the habitual consciousness of this could not but act as a very powerful restraint on these inward evil tendencies. The first consideration, therefore, by which the Apostle would secure compliance with the precept is the change that had been wrought in the worldly position of his brethren by their introduction to the higher and more enduring relations of faith.

But not only is indulgence in fleshly lusts dishonorable to the Christian. It is, says Peter, as hurtful and perilous, as it is unbecoming. They '*war against the soul*'—the very metropolis and citadel of man's nature. They may also injuriously affect his other interests. In their outward working

* As in ch. 1 : 1; see p. 9. By some (Pagninus, Beza, Piscator, Estius, Steiger, De Wette, Wiesinger, etc.) the verse is construed thus: 'I exhort that as foreigners and sojourners ye abstain;' and then it presents a consideration that should move the readers to abstain, rather than one that prompted the exhortation. But the essential result is the same.

† Jer. 14 : 8; Heb. 13 : 14.

‡ Vs. 3, 9; 2 Tim. 2 : 4; Heb. 6 : 4, 5; Lam. 4 : 5.

they may hinder his success in business—waste his substance —blight his reputation—consume his bodily health—and bring him down in sorrow to a premature grave. But even that is not the worst. By their very presence within, they '*war against the soul.*' They trouble its peace by the fire and tumult of passion, or by corroding cares. They darken its vision—taint all its powers with weakness and corruption—intercept its communications with spiritual things and heavenly influences—and so threaten its life. For this war is relentless and exterminating, and, but for the mighty succors which Divine grace sends to human necessities, can result only in the soul's second death—in its final and perpetual severance from God, from holiness and joy. According to the repeated, terrible warnings of inspiration: 'Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. . . . For the end of those things is death. . . . To be carnally minded is death.'*—Here again surely is argument enough for jealously watching and rigorously suppressing the first motions of sin in the heart, and for cherishing a pure and heavenly mind.

The 12th verse, however, takes us still a step further, in regard both to duty and motive. Thus far the exhortation has been to the culture of the inner world of the spirit—the eradication of the roots of bitterness indigenous to the soil—the making of the tree good, that the fruit may be good also—the keeping of the heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.† But now the outer life itself is brought under review—whatever is subject to the censure, not only of God and the conscience, but also of our fellow-men.

And here I would have you remark the admirable moderation—the absolute freedom from excess or extravagance in any direction—the unfailing common sense, so to speak—that characterizes the New Testament writers. Revealing, as they alone do, the unspeakable value of the soul, they make no show of despising or neglecting the body, but on the contrary treat it with all reverence as what has equally been redeemed

* James 1 : 15; Rom. 6 : 21; 8 : 6. † Matt. 12 : 33; Prov. 4 : 23.

with the blood of Christ, and is now the temple of the Holy Ghost, and the heir of the resurrection. Dwelling much on the duty and the delights of heavenly contemplation, with what horror would they yet have shrunk from the fanaticism, which, under pretence of its spiritual raptures, has sometimes claimed exemption from the restraints of morality, or of ordinary decency! Proclaiming it as the one grand principle of the Christian life, to 'walk by faith, not by sight,' and themselves living, as no other men ever did, under 'the powers of the world to come,'* in no instance do they betray the least disposition, such as was rife in the Church not long after their departure, to withdraw themselves or their converts from contact with this world's affairs, or beyond the reach of its temptations. And, finally, spurning with a calm resolution all thought of submitting their religious faith and practice to the control of society, its opinions or its laws, they are at the same time very far from being indifferent to the impressions which their fellow-men may receive from observation of their conduct. Everywhere they at once exemplify, and inculcate, the obligation, not only to lay no stumbling-block before others, and, if it be possible, as much as lieth in us, to live peaceably with all men, but also to let our light shine, not for our own glory, but for others' guidance and comfort, and even, so far as fidelity to truth and our one Master, Christ, will allow, to become all things to all men, that we may by all means save some.† Paul himself, though he accounted it 'a very small thing' in its bearings on his own personal interests, 'that he should be judged of man's judgment,' yet in his tender solicitude that the ministry, and through it the Gospel, should not be blamed, and men's souls needlessly prejudiced, was ever careful, even in his laborious and disinterested enterprises of Christian charity, to 'provide things honest'—that is, fair, comely, honorable—'not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.' And hence too his anxiety that the Thessalonians, while waiting for the Son of God from

* 2 Cor. 5 : 7; Heb 6 : 5.

† 1 Rom. 12 : 18; 14 : 13; Matt. 5 : 16; 1 Cor. 9 : 22.

heaven, should 'walk honestly'—decently, becomingly—'toward those without.'*

The same spirit of apostolic longing for the salvation of others breathes in the passage before us: '*Having your conversation honest*'—or, in modern phrase, *your walk comely, your behavior good*†—'*among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evil-doers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.*'

Here, you perceive, is no wish that the *foreigners and sojourners* should shrink from intercourse with those among whom they temporarily dwell; much less that they should expend their care on assuming virtues that they do not possess, and so keeping up an appearance of superior sanctity; as if, to use Leighton's illustration, you should 'stick some figs, or hang some clusters of grapes upon a thorn-bush, though they cannot grow upon it.' No; their '*behavior*' must *be* '*good*,' really, substantially so—the natural, healthy, inevitable outworking of a good and honest heart. And this '*among*,' before the eyes of, '*the Gentiles*,' and with a view to their profiting, through the correction of their misconceptions, and the removal of their prejudices, and the silencing of ignorant or malicious misrepresentations.

Of this form of trial our Lord had forewarned His disciples in the very beginning; as where, in His Sermon on the Mount, He gave intimation of a coming time, 'when men should revile them, and persecute them, and should say all manner of evil against them falsely for His sake.'‡ And that the warning did not fail of a speedy fulfilment, is abundantly apparent from the New Testament history. It was soon found to be an easy and plausible thing, to defame the announcement of a free justification by sovereign grace, through the faith of the sinner, as a doctrine of licentiousness; to excite suspicions of disloyalty and lawlessness against men who gloried in being under law to another King,

* 1 Cor. 4 : 3; 2 Cor. 6 : 3; 8 : 21, (καλὰ;) 1 Thess. 1 : 10; 4 : 12, (εὐσχημόνως.)

† ἀναστροφὴν (as in ch. 1 : 15; see p. 68). . . . . καλήν, (the same word as in the latter half of the verse, and ch. 4 : 10, etc.)

‡ Matt. 5 : 11.

one Jesus ; to slander even the holy private assemblies of the faithful for their feasts of love, and for communion in the body and blood of Christ, as devoted to the celebration of such vile mysteries as were common among the heathen themselves ; and, in a word, to malign as revolutionary disturbers of the world's peace, and enemies of the human race, those who waged open war on the ancient idolatries, and denounced the wrath of God against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. And thus, about the very time when our Epistle was written, the pure and benevolent religion of the Son of God our Saviour came to be 'everywhere spoken against' as 'a strange and baleful superstition'—'a deadly superstition,' and His followers were generally regarded as infamous for their crimes, and the storm of governmental and popular fury, that had been darkening and threatening for years, burst in thunder and fire on the unresisting flock of God.* To this state of affairs there are numerous allusions in our Epistle, (ch. 1 : 6 ; 3 : 16 ; 4 : 4, 12, 16, 17.)

Meanwhile, however, as in the truth of the Gospel, fairly presented to the soul, there is a self-evidencing power that commends it to every man's conscience in the sight of God,† so also in every man, even the most depraved, there is that which, in his more favorable hours of observation and reflection,

> —— 'feels how awful goodness is, and sees
> Virtue in her shape how lovely.'‡

To this silent witness and ally of the Church in the hearts of her enemies, Peter would have his brethren address the appeal of a holy life : '*Having your behavior among the Gentiles good, that, whereas*'—rather, according to the margin, *wherein* —'*they speak against you as evil-doers, they may, from the good works* which *they behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.*'§

* Luke 23 : 2 ; John 19 : 12 ; Acts 17 : 6, 7 ; 24 : 5 ; 28 : 22 ; Rom. 1 : 18 ; 3 : 8 ; 1 Cor. 9 : 21. See the famous passages in Suetonius, *Nero*, ('Christiani genus hominum superstitionis novæ ac maleficæ,') and Tacitus, *Ann.* xv. 44, ('per flagitia invisos . . Christianos. . . . exitiabilis superstitio . . . odio humani generis convicti.')

† 2 Cor. 4 : 2. ‡ Milton, *P. L.* iv. 847–8.

§ *τὴν ἀναστροφὴν ὑμῶν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ἔχοντες καλήν· ἵνα ἐν ᾧ καταλαλοῦσιν*

The meaning seems plainly to be this: Let your course of life be so clearly and in all respects good—good in all those relations which I am about to specify—that even in matters, in regard to which your heathen neighbors do now readily and grossly misconceive and misrepresent you, they may at last be won to acknowledge their error, and to 'report that God is in you of a truth,'* and glorify Him as the giver of such grace to men—glorify Him by their own humble confession of sin, and thankful acceptance of His mercy. I can scarcely doubt that, as Peter wrote the words, his mind reverted to the memorable scene on the mountain's brow, when, standing near his Lord, he heard that saying from His lips: 'Ye are the light of the world. . . . Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.'†

As to the phrase, '*day of visitation*,' God is said to visit men, when He specially displays toward them either His mercy or His wrath; and for each of these purposes He has a '*day*'—a set time, definite and limited.‡ Some, accordingly, have thought that a day of judgment in this world is what is here meant, or else the day of final judgment. But it is much more natural, as yielding a more obvious sense, and one that accords better with the rest of the sentence, to understand the Apostle as referring to a day of gracious visi

ὑμῶν ὡς κακοποιῶν, ἐκ τῶν καλῶν ἔργων ἐποπτεύσαντες κτλ. The student will note the emphatic position of *καλήν*. In *ἔχοντες* we have an example of a not uncommon anacoluthon, whereby force and prominence are given to the participial clause. Winer cites as other instances 2 Cor. 9 : 10, 11, 13; Eph. 4 : 2, etc.—The *whereas* of our English version and the Bishops' Bible is for *pro eo quod* of Castalio, Beza, etc.; but it does not express the Greek. And equally objectionable are the renderings *quoniam*, *since*, (Hottinger and others; as if *ἐν ᾧ*=*ἐφ' ᾧ*,) and *while*, (Penn and others; as if for the *ἐν ᾧ χρόνῳ* of Mark 2 : 19 and John 5 : 7.)—Macknight takes *ἐκ* partitively; *some of your good works*. But it rather points to the *source* of the *δόξα*.—'Ἐποπτεύσαντες (Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford read *ἐποπτεύοντες*, (Sin. B,) *beholding*. In the New Testament this verb is found only here and ch. 3 : 2,) lit. *having beheld* them. For the Greek does not even imply a relative, to which *τῶν ἔργων* is antecedent. The *τῶν* is to be explained as an article of repeated mention, *τῶν καλῶν ἔργων* being really involved in the previous *ἀναστροφὴν καλὴν*.—For *δοξάσωσι*, Sin. has *δοξάσουσιν*.

* 1 Cor. 14 : 25. † Matt. 5 : 14, 16.

‡ Comp. Job 10 : 12; 31 : 14; Ps. 8 : 4; Is. 10 : 13; Jer. 6 : 15; Luke 19 : 44, etc.

tation—the very day which had then just dawned, and which is still shining, during which, according to James's description of the first calling and conversion of the Gentiles through Peter's ministry, 'God is visiting the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name.'* Now, says Peter, it will greatly further the accomplishment of this benignant design, if you, who are already called, be careful to 'adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.'† Be sure, therefore, that you keep that object ever distinctly in view.

But alas! my hearers, is it not true of some of you, as of Jerusalem of old, that *you* too have not yet 'known the time of your visitation'? What if it should terminate, while the things which belong unto your peace are still hid from your eyes!‡ Must it not then be, that, as in her case, so in yours, some great catastrophe will finally avenge God's abused patience, and slighted grace?

If, on the other hand, you have obtained mercy, and have bowed yourselves down in glad submission before the heavenly Visitant, then learn from what has been said the twofold duty to which, as foreigners and sojourners here on the earth, you too, like these primitive brethren, are now solemnly and irrevocably bound. You are, first, to be jealous over yourselves with godly jealousy—aiming perpetually at a more and more complete healing of the plagues of your own hearts—daily perfecting holiness in the fear of God.§ And then, not resting selfishly satisfied with your own individual blessing, but 'looking every man also on the things of others,'‖ you are to labor for their salvation as for your own. Nay, one main impulse in prosecuting the work of your own sanctification must be, that you may thereby hope, through the accompanying visitations of God's quickening grace, still further to enlarge the number of His worshippers, and swell, by means of ever new voices, the anthem of His praise.

* Acts 15 : 14.—Œcumenius thought that the reference was to the *examination, inquisition* (ἐξέτασις) which the heathen would institute as to the life of the Christians. This idea was at first adopted by Bengel, (as it has been by a few others;) but afterward he explained the phrase of the last day.

† Tit. 2 : 10. ‡ Luke 19 : 42, 44.

§ 1 Kings 8 : 38; 2 Cor. 7 : 1; 11 : 2. ‖ Phil. 2 : 4.

Lecture XIII.

1 *PETER* 2 : 13–16.

'Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by Him for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: as free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.'

In the preceding verse the writer urges his brethren to maintain an '*honest conversation*,' or comely, good behavior, '*among the Gentiles*,' from a consideration of the salutary influence which they might thus exert on their heathen observers. In the verses now before us this general idea is illustrated by applying it to one of their more outward and obvious relations—that, namely, which they held to civil government. Nearly all editions of the Greek Testament plainly indicate this connection by the insertion of a word which our translators have dropped. Instead of simply saying, '*Submit yourselves*,' as in our version, the general reading is, '*Submit yourselves, therefore*,'* that is, with a view to that same result, the glory of God in the conversion of the Gentiles.

The topic in hand is the political duty of Christians—a topic neither too secular nor too delicate for apostolic treatment. There is not, indeed, here, or elsewhere in the New Testament, any discussion of the comparative merits of different forms of government, or of particular governmental measures. In so far as Christians might at any time be called to bear a

* Lachmann and Alford omit the *οὖν*, on the authority of Sin. A, B, C, and the Amiatine Vulgate. The Syriac also wants it. Our translators followed Wiclif, Tyndale, and the Geneva Bible.

part in originating the one or the other, they would no doubt have to be guided by their judgment of what was at once consistent with justice, and conducive to the general good. All that the Apostle undertakes to determine is the duty they owe to the actually existing government, whatever may have been its origin, and to the laws, as the declaration of the government's will.

Now, in these respects, though with the limitations to be noted hereafter, that duty is nearly summed up in the one word, submission. And, comparing Peter's politics with Paul's, we find the two agree on this point precisely. 'Let every soul,' says the latter, 'be subject'—or submit itself; for the term he uses is the one that we have in the text—'unto the higher powers.'* And says the former: '*Submit yourselves* † *to every ordinance of man*'—literally, *to every human creation*, or *creature*, or *institution* ‡—'*for the Lord's sake; whether to the king*' §—for the old republican hatred of the very name of king, which had even deterred the Cæsars from assuming that title at Rome,‖ did not exist to the same extent among the Greeks or the Jews; and in the New Testament, accordingly, we find it applied to the Emperor**—'*whether to the king as supreme*,' as the head of the state and chief magistrate,†† '*or to governors as sent by him*,'‡‡ and so bearing only a delegated authority. In other words, Christians are required to submit themselves to civil rulers of every rank and degree, acting within their severally appropriate spheres.

Observe now the grounds on which this duty rests, or the motives by which it is enforced.

* Rom. 13 : 1, (*ὑποτασσέσθω.*)

† *ὑποτάγητε.* A middle force in the aorist passive is not uncommon. Comp. *ταπεινώθητε* of chap. 5 : 6.

‡ *ἀνθρωπίνῃ* (omitted in Sin.) *κτίσει.*

§ *εἴτε βασιλεῖ.*

‖ 'The slaves of Commodus or Caracalla would have started at the name of royalty.' Gibbon, *Roman Empire*, ch. 44.

** Comp. Matt. 10 : 18; 14 : 9; John 19 : 15; 1 Tim. 2 : 2, etc.

†† Whereas in Rom. 13 : 1 the superiority is that which belongs to all rulers in their relations to the ruled.

‡‡ *ὡς δι αὐτοῦ πεμπομένοις.* Some of the older interpreters (as Calvin and Estius) err in referring the pronoun to God.

1. '*Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake*'—for the sake, that is, of the Lord Christ. The very relation to Him, in which you glory, so far from annulling or impairing this obligation, adds to it force and sacredness.

Viewed in certain aspects, all magistracy is, no doubt, a '*human institution*.' Not only are the laws of human enactment; the legislative authority itself, however variously organized, has its foundations in the necessities of human society, and exists by the will or the sufferance of those over whom it is exercised. Its jurisdiction, moreover, is confined to the secular affairs of men—their mutual rights and wrongs in the intercourse of this life. With what Scripture calls 'things pertaining to God'* it cannot properly or usefully intermeddle. And on all these accounts civil government may be characterized as a human thing.

But it is also Divine. He who made man made him for society, and whatever is essential to the existence of society is so by the appointment of our Creator. There can, however, be no society without order, and no order without law, and no law without a lawgiver, who shall likewise provide for its execution. All these things, therefore, are of God. The sin, which has entered into the world, has indeed corrupted and defiled every earthly relation, but no such original relation has it abolished; and, in this particular matter of government, it has rather strengthened the necessity for it, and for the multiplication of legal restraints and penalties.† Wherever, accordingly, men are found, though it be in a den of robbers, or in a community of rebels and pirates, they are still found living under law of some kind. And the very universality of the fact, as it results inevitably from the joint working of their nature and their circumstances, is no less an indication of the will of Providence.

Thus, what our text describes as a '*human institution*' is, in a far higher and ultimate sense, 'the ordinance of God.' It is expressly so styled in that famous context in the Epistle to the Romans, (13 : 1–7,) to which I have already referred. There Paul is most emphatic and absolute in proclaiming,

* Heb. 2 : 17; 5 : 1. † 1 Tim. 1 : 9, 10.

that 'there is no power but of God: the powers that be'—without regard to the manner in which they came to be; whether by conquest, or inheritance, or popular suffrage—'the powers that be are ordained of God.' And so he does not hesitate to speak of even heathen magistrates as no less truly, though less directly, and for quite different purposes, 'ministers of God,' than the Apostles themselves.* That 'the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will'—that over all the earth, in Babylon and in pagan Rome, as in Mount Zion and the city of the Great King, in the rise and organization of empires, as in their progress and decline and fall, 'the Heavens do rule'—this truth, which Christendom itself in our day is hastening to forget, proud Nebuchadnezzar of old was taught by his own miraculous humiliation.† And the same general truth may be considered as implied in the injunction to 'submit ourselves to every human institution *for the Lord's sake*.' This is as much as to say, that our obedience will be defective in its principle, unless it recognizes the presence in human government of an authority more sacred and august than that of man, whether of the sovereign emperor, or of the sovereign people. '*God* standeth in the congregation of the mighty; *He* judgeth among the gods.'‡

But our Apostle's phraseology suggests more than this. In the Epistles the word '*Lord*,' except when it is used as a substitute for the Old Testament Jehovah, almost invariably designates the Lord Jesus Christ, and there is no reason to doubt that it does so here, as well as in the third verse of this chapter. Into His hands, as the well-beloved Son, the Father hath committed all judgment—all power in heaven and in earth—the entire judicial and executive prerogative of the Godhead. He is thus the Head over all things—the Prince of the kings of the earth—and by Him kings reign, and princes decree justice.§ If, therefore, ye call Him Master and Lord, fail not to reverence Him in the persons of those

* Comp. Rom. 13 : 4, 6 with Rom. 15 : 16; 2 Cor. 6 : 4, etc.
† Dan. 4 : 25, 26. ‡ Ps. 82 : 1.
§ John 5 : 22; Matt. 28 : 18; Eph. 1 : 22; Rev. 1 : 5; Prov. 8 : 15.

who, however unconsciously it may be to themselves, are in reality His vicegerents among men. Let your willing subjection to human law be a service rendered to Christ Himself.

Nor is it to be overlooked that, as this precept of obedience to earthly rulers now came to the Church through the Apostles from '*the Lord*,' and on that account also rested on His authority, so it had formerly been illustrated again and again, while He yet dwelt among us, in His personal teaching and example. Peter at least had not forgotten the scene, when, calmly pointing to the image and superscription on the tribute money, Jesus baffled the crafty malignity of His enemies by requiring them to 'render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's.'* And he remembered, too, how the mouth of a fish from the Sea of Galilee had been made to furnish to his own hand the means of satisfying the law's demand, not only for himself, but for the free Son of God and Heir of the temple;† and how, when his rash zeal drew the sword in his Master's defence, the Master sternly commanded him to return the sword into its sheath, and healed the wound it had made.‡ Yes, the unresisting Lamb of God, whom more than twelve legions of angels stood ready to rescue from the hands of all His foes, silently yields Himself to the arrest, and dies an uncomplaining victim to the unjust sentence of human law.

On these several accounts, then—inasmuch as the sovereignty of the Lord Jesus Christ is represented by the kings and governors of the earth, and His will in this regard has been clearly conveyed to His disciples both by word and deed—the Apostle may be understood as enjoining on his brethren submission to every human institution '*for the Lord's sake*.'—But he immediately adds other, though secondary, considerations.

* Matt. 22 : 21.

† Matt. 17 : 24–27. For, though the tax paid on this occasion was probably for the use of the temple, and may have had its origin in the Mosaic statute of Ex. 30 : 11–16, still the incident is none the less fitted to illustrate our Lord's spirit of subjection to authority, Divine and human.

‡ Luke 22 : 50, 51; John 18 : 10, 11.

2. Thus, in the 14th verse he adverts to the salutary ends for which government exists. Submit yourselves . . . . whether to the king as supreme, or to governors as sent by him *for the punishment of evil-doers,* and the praise of well-doers;'* † it being, of course, implied that the purposes for which the supreme power commissions its 'subordinates, equally define the spirit and aim of its own immediate action.

What, then, are those purposes? Not the regulation of men's opinions, nor the determination of their religious faith, nor the coercion of their consciences. Into the inner sanctuary of the soul, where it holds converse with spiritual and eternal things, the civil magistrate, be his station what it may, must not seek to intrude. His place of ministry, if I may so say, is in the outer court; his domain, that which is seen and temporal. Especially is it his care to maintain public order—to dispense justice between man and man—by all necessary pains and penalties to repress and punish violence and fraud, while, even by so doing, as well as by other and positive manifestations of his favor, he protects and encourages the honest and beneficent classes of society.

Now, Christ's followers being by their profession bound to study, not merely the things that make for peace, but whatsoever is good and profitable unto men—'if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise' ‡—civil government, it is obvious, according to this statement of its province and functions, can have no other than a benign aspect toward them. 'Rulers,' says Paul, 'are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.' § And so another motive for loyal

* According to the received text: '*for the punishment, indeed, of ev.*' But the *μέν* has long been cancelled by critical editors, (on very large authority, including Sin.)

† *ἔπαινον δὲ ἀγαθοποιῶν.* The last word occurs nowhere else in the New Testament.

‡ Rom. 14 : 19; Tit. 3 : 8; Phil. 4 : 8.

§ Rom. 13 : 3, 4.

submission to human government is, that government is the guardian and friend of good men.

But what, you may ask, if this ideal be not actually realized? What if the rulers themselves be wicked men, and the government itself a tyranny and oppression? Must Christians in that case still 'needs be subject, not only for wrath,' or from fear of personal consequences, 'but also for conscience' sake'?* The question is not without its difficulties; and only a brief answer can here be attempted.

(1.) In the first place, let it be considered that, even under what we may regard as bad governments, the good resulting from them to the mass of the community greatly preponderates over the evil; that there is probably no government, not even that of the worst slave plantation, that is not on the whole to be preferred to anarchy, or no government at all; and that, therefore, the argument from the uses of government never quite fails.

(2.) In the second place; there is no question whatever that, when human government—I do not say errs, however grievously, in the administration of its own affairs, but—transcends the limits prescribed by its very nature and the ends of its being, and Cæsar arrogates to himself the things that are God's, forbidding what God has commanded, or commanding what God has forbidden, our duty in every such case is to hearken unto God more than unto men.† In the conflict of authorities the higher authority must rule. As Jeremy Taylor has it:‡ 'Though we must obey man for God's sake, yet we must never disobey God for man's sake.' Or suppose that, after taking all pains to inform ourselves aright, we are even mistaken in the belief that in some particular case there does exist this conflict between the human and the Divine, we are still to follow the light that is in us. Under no circumstances can a man be at liberty to violate his conscience toward God. Nor does this course necessarily involve any real violation of the apostolic precept. The Apostles themselves did not violate it, when, in carrying out their great commission, they resolutely confronted the threatening Sanhedrim

* Rom. 13 : 5. † Acts 4 : 19. ‡ *Great Exemplar*, i. 5. 19.

and a frowning Empire, and were everywhere met with bonds and imprisonment and death. Instantly preaching the word in season and out of season, they maintained their loyalty to Him who is the King of kings and the Lord of lords; and they at the same time rendered due honor to His representatives on earth, by yielding themselves without resistance or murmur to the magistrate's sword, though wielded by unrighteous and profane and cruel hands.

(3.) In the third place, the Christian law does not strip a man of whatever civil rights his country's law allows him, nor does it prohibit him from defending those rights in any lawful way. Again and again we find Paul standing on the dignity of a Roman citizen, and on another occasion he firmly appeals from governors sent by the Emperor to the Emperor himself.* On the same principle an American citizen, in perfect consistency with all Christian obligation, may not only prosecute his cause from court to court, but use his influence and his suffrage for changing his rulers and the entire policy of the public administration. Nay, on the very same principle, should those rulers, when thus legitimately set aside, persist in retaining by force their seats of power, or should they at any time, and in any other way, undertake to act in open defiance of the law and constitution of the land, then, due regard being had to circumstances, the prospect of success, and like prudential considerations, the American Christian might properly join his fellow-citizens in suppressing the usurpers, and that, if necessary, by the sword. Very probably it would be his solemn duty so to do, even at the hazard of his own life. In such a government as ours the law and the constitution are the supreme authority, to which all others must yield. In the full apostolic sense, they too are '*human institutions*,' and are 'ordained of God,' and to them our rulers, from the President down, are equally with us bound to '*submit themselves*.' When, therefore, in some evil time, rebellion against these breaks forth in high places, and the sword, that was forged for their defence, is prostituted to the work of their subversion, a free nation offends not

* Acts 16 : 37; 22 : 25; 25 : 11.

God by wresting that sword from the transgressor's grasp, and wielding it for his own swift and condign punishment. In all this, I conceive, there is still nothing at variance with either the letter or the spirit of the text; which, in truth, I need scarcely add, contemplates no such case as that.

(4.) But now, lastly, these things being understood and remembered, the Apostle's rule may safely be taken as absolute and universal in its application. It does forbid utterly, on the part of Christians, all seditious plotting against the established government and laws, and the constituted authorities, of the empire, as well as all active resistance to the same. Citizens of the 'kingdom which cannot be moved,' they must not 'meddle with them that are given to change.'* Like the captive Jews in Babylon, so these strangers and pilgrims on the earth are to seek the peace of the cities of their sojourning.† They will doubtless find much everywhere to condemn and deplore. But, be their judgment what it may respecting the form and structure and policy of the government, or the character of the rulers, no speculations of theirs about expediency or abstract justice, about self-evident truths or the rights of man, will justify them in originating, or coöperating in, the cabals and conflicts of revolution; nor is the obligation to 'render tribute to whom tribute is due, and custom to whom custom,'‡ in the least degree affected by any opinions they may entertain as to the wisdom and equity of the tax, or of the manner in which the public revenue is spent. The government itself may be a despotism, and both the king and his subordinates such monsters of almost superhuman wickedness as were most of the Roman emperors; even this will not release the members of Christ's 'little flock'§ from the duty of submission. They may then aspire to the crowns of martyrs, not of tyrannicides. Reverencing still the dark and distorted shadow of the Divine sovereignty—bearing meekly, and in the strength of their heavenly Lord, their own sharp and heavy cross—they will leave it to His all-controlling providence, and to outraged humanity, to redress the wrongs of

* Heb. 12 : 28; Prov. 24 : 21.
† Jer. 29 : 7.
‡ Rom. 13 : 7.
§ Luke 12 : 32.

nations. And meanwhile they will not cease to pray 'for kings and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty;'* and, in so far as the prayer may seem to be unavailing, they will only the more deeply sigh and groan within themselves for the coming of that Ruler over men who is 'just, ruling in the fear of God. And He shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain.'†

3. The 15th verse brings into view still another reason for a careful compliance with the course prescribed. This inoffensive, dutiful behavior of Christians in regard even to heathen, and it might be hostile, governments, is presented as an important element in the plan of God for bringing His enemies and theirs, if not to a gracious repentance—the full, blessed result of Christian well-doing, at which the 12th verse points—at least to shame. '*For so*'—or *thus*‡—'*is the will of God*'—that highest law, which needs but to be made known to His children, at once to satisfy them as to the path of safety and honor; '*thus is the will of God, that with well-doing*'—literally, *that doing well* §—'*ye silence*,' or, according to the primary import of the word, *muzzle*,‖ '*the ignorance of the*** *foolish men*.' As this desirable consequence may reasonably be expected from a consistent Christian walk in all your social relations, so especially in that relation in which you are most exposed to heathen observation and jealousy—your relation to the civil powers.

It was, in fact, mainly in that relation that the primitive believers, as we had occasion to remark in the last Lecture,††

* 1 Tim. 2 : 2. † 2 Sam. 23 : 3, 4. ‡ οὕτως. § ἀγαθοποιοῦντας.

‖ φιμοῦν. The metaphor (mistaken by Doddridge and others, who render it, *to bridle in*, etc.) is retained in very many occasions, as *capistrare, einen Maulkorb anlegen, stop the mouth*, etc. If there is any objection to *muzzle*, (Dr. Brown's word,) it is not that it is too strong for the occasion, (though even Calvin thinks the original harsh from its novelty, *propter novitatem dura*,) but simply that, except when citing Deut. 25 : 4, (1 Cor. 9 : 9; 1 Tim. 5 : 18,) the New Testament writers seem always elsewhere to use φιμοῦν in a secondary sense, (Matt. 22 : 12, 34; Mark 1 : 25; 4 : 39; Luke 4 : 35.)

** τῶν, v. 12. †† See pp. 132, 133.

found themselves very soon subjected to general misapprehension and odium. Gathered at first in largest numbers from the temple and the synagogue, they were for some time naturally enough taken by their neighbors for nothing more than a fanatical Jewish sect, and, as such, they at once inherited much of the suspicion, contempt, and hatred, with which the Jews themselves were regarded as a factious and turbulent race. By and by, however, these same sentiments burned even more fiercely against the Christians as Christians, as it came gradually to be understood, that the popular superstitions and idolatries, and the savage intolerance and blasphemy of the imperial power, were likely to encounter a far more formidable antagonist, than the sullen, stubborn, exclusive selfishness of Judaism, in the irrepressible life of the Church, with her energy of faith, her glowing zeal, her uncompromising steadfastness, her meek endurance, her paramount and immeasurable devotion to the service and glory of 'one Jesus which was dead, whom she affirmed to be alive.' * Then, indeed, began 'the heathen to rage, and the people to imagine a vain thing. The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers took counsel together,' against the persistent disturber of their unholy peace, the bold asserter of the prerogative of Him who was 'higher than the highest,' the overturner of the altars of devils, the world-wide revolutionist of the ages, whom they learned daily more and more to dread in their tortured and bleeding, but still unconquered and evermore unconquerable, Victim. So '*foolish*'—so senseless—so brutish—had men's darkened hearts become.† And as their bloody hands, so also their slanderous tongues proclaimed their '*ignorance*' of the whole spirit and principles and tendency of Christianity, as the devout respecter of 'all that is called God or that is worshipped,'‡ the firmest bond of social order, at once the gentlest and the mightiest friend of nations, as of individual man in every sphere and relation. Even the mild and philosophic Pliny, writing to the Emperor about the Christians of the very provinces to which our Epis-

* Acts 25 : 19.

† Ps. 2 : 1, 2; Eccl. 5 : 8; Rom. 1 : 21.

‡ 2 Thess. 2 : 4.

tle was addressed, and within fifty years of its date, plainly intimates that a close and severe scrutiny had not enabled him to discover in them any thing worthy of death, excepting only what he calls their headstrong and inflexible obstinacy; but that, he certainly thought, ought to be punished.* Such was still the wisdom of men—the best and wisest of them. It was none the less foolishness with God; and the way, the Apostle tells us, in which, according to God's will, this '*ignorance of foolish men*,' mistaking heroic loyalty to Christ for self-willed disloyalty to Cæsar, was to be overcome, or at any rate muzzled and silenced, was through the beneficent lives of His maligned and persecuted children, and, in particular, their patient '*submission to every human institution*.' Need I remind you how that will of God, through the operation of His own truth and grace, has prevailed? Who now so ignorant, or foolish, or shameless, as to assert or even pretend to believe, that a good Christian can be a bad citizen?

It only remains for us to notice the 16th verse, in which, as I understand it,† the believers are cautioned against a

* 'Neque enim dubitabam, qualecumque esset quod faterentur, pervicaciam certe et inflexibilem obstinationem debere puniri.'

† The precise logical structure of vv. 13–17 cannot, perhaps, be determined with certainty. The following are the principal variations: 1. Chrysostom, Œcumenius, Estius, Gerhard, Bengel, Moldenhauer, Olshausen, De Wette, find a syntactical connection between *ὑποτάγητε* of v. 13 and *ἐλεύθεροι* of v. 16; and for the same reason Dr. Schmidt, Griesbach, Knapp, Hahn, Bloomfield, Trollope, and others, put v. 15 into a parenthesis. 2. One independent period is formed out of vv. 15, 16 by (not the original edition of the English version, which, like many others, ends each of vv. 14–16 with a full stop) Tyndale, the Bishops' Bible, the Dutch version, Erasmus, Calvin, Castalio, Piscator, Hammond, Seb. Schmidt, Wiesinger, Alford, and many others. 3. The same thing is done with vv. 16 (as the protasis) and 17 (as the apodosis) by Schirmer, Augusti, Meyer, Lachmann, Steiger, Jachmann, Brown, Huther; of whom Lachmann and Brown also connect v. 15 with what precedes, while Schirmer makes it parenthetical. The last arrangement, as given by Lachmann and Brown, while it explains regularly (as does also the first) the nominatives of v. 16, (but on this point see p. 133, note 1, on *ἔχοντες* of v. 12,) is recommended, as regards v. 15, by the double correspondence: *ὅτι οὕτως ἐστὶ τὸ θέλημα τοῦ Θεοῦ*=*διὰ τὸν Κύριον*, and *ἀγαθοποιοῦντας*=*ἀγαθοποιῶν*; and, as regards v. 16, by analogous constructions in this Epistle. Comp. ch 1 : 14, 15, 22; ch. 2 : 1, 2, 4, 5, 11. In this way, moreover, the truth is certainly brought out with great vividness, that Christian freedom best shows itself in 'rendering to all their dues,' (Rom. 13 : 7.) On the other hand, Wiesin-

snare into which they were in some danger of falling; and the same temptation has occasionally recurred in later periods of the Church.

I have alluded to the Jewish impatience of the Roman yoke. Now, we may well suppose that this patriotic feeling was by no means extinguished in the Jewish Christians. Must it not rather in many instances have been strengthened by their faith in Jesus as the Messiah, who was to 'restore again the kingdom to Israel'?* And you will also remember that *all* the Christians of that age, Gentile and Jewish alike, shared equally in the earnest expectation and hope of the speedy establishment on earth of that glorious kingdom, in which they too were to reign as kings and priests. Besides, 'where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty'—a sudden and marvellous enlargement and elevation of the human soul. How, then, shall the heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, bought as they have been with so great a price, be any longer 'the servants of men'? Nay, has not an Apostle expressly forbidden them so to be?† Such, you perceive, was the snare; and it is quite sufficient to account for the apparent anxiety with which the Apostles so often 'put' their brethren 'in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates.'‡

But now mark the Divine wisdom and force with which Peter, in the present instance, sweeps it away: '*As free*'—yes, I gladly acknowledge your high standing as 'the Lord's freemen,'§ and I the more confidently appeal to you as such for an unreluctant compliance with what I have been saying. Think not that you will thus detract one jot or tittle from what I have conceded to be, and gloried in as being, your peculiar dignity as God's 'royal priesthood,' (v. 9.) Submit yourselves, I say, not as slaves, but '*as free, and not as having*

ger insists, not without force, that, without v. 16, v. 15 is deficient and bare; that the evangelical freedom (v. 16) might be made a pretence for disregarding human authority, but not for violating some of the duties enjoined in v. 17; that ὡς δοῦλοι Θεοῦ is not a suitable motive for τὴν ἀδελφότητα ἀγαπᾶτε, and τὸν Θεὸν φοβεῖσθε (?); and, finally, that τῆς κακίας points back to ἀγαθοποιεῖν, and ὡς δοῦλοι Θεοῦ to τὸ θέλημα τοῦ Θεοῦ.

* Acts 1 : 6. † 2 Cor. 3 : 17; Rom. 8 : 17; 1 Cor. 7 : 23.

‡ Tit. 3 : 1. § 1 Cor. 7 : 22.

*that freedom for a covering of wickedness'**—so the clause may be rendered—'*but as servants of God,*'† which you certainly feel no humiliation in claiming to be. Well, then, I have declared it to be 'the will of God' that ye thus submit yourselves. The civil powers are His ordinances, as well as man's, and you cannot resist them without incurring the guilt of a wickedness, which, so far from being covered, concealed, or excused, will indeed be vastly aggravated, by the pretence of your high calling of God in Christ Jesus. The very freedom which you might be tempted to plead in opposition to my precept—in what does it consist but in your being 'the servants of God'?

After so protracted a discussion, I must not, in conclusion, venture to dwell on the solemn and mournful interest which our subject derives from the current history of our times, and of our own afflicted land. Surely—surely—these can be no other than the perilous times of the last days, when men should despise dominion, being lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, presumptuous, self-willed, not afraid to speak evil of dignities.‡ Let us all be on our guard against the infections of a pestilence that is limited by no lines of latitude or of longitude, or of political division; which no bayonets, no bullets, can reach, and no blockade can confine. For, alas! it taints the atmosphere, is fast poisoning the very

* *καὶ μὴ ὡς ἐπικάλυμμα ἔχοντες τῆς κακίας τὴν ἐλευθερίαν.* The *ὡς* belongs, not to *ἐπικάλυμμα*, (Macknight and others,) but to the participle.—The article before *ἐλευθερίαν* refers back to *ἐλεύθεροι*.—I do not suppose that there is any allusion whatever in this verse to the cap *(pileus)* that was assumed by manumitted slaves, (Beza,) or to the white baptismal robe. (Corn. a Lapide.) But neither is *ἐπικάλυμμα* specifically *a cloak*, except in the secondary sense of the English word, as=*cover*. The verb *ἐπικαλύπτω*, like the noun itself, occurs but once in the New Testament, and there (Rom. 4 : 7) it is in our version *to cover*.—The *maliciousness*, *malice*, of the old English versions (except the Bishops', *naughtiness)* comes from the Vulgate *malitiæ*, which, however, may have been used in its general, etymological sense of *evilness*, *badness*.

† *δοῦλοι Θεοῦ*. Tischendorf and Alford read *Θεοῦ δοῦλοι* (Sin. etc.)

‡ 2 Tim. 3 : 1–4; 2 Pet. 2 : 10; Jude 8.

blood of our age, and in our every household its breath is felt. As for those infatuated men who have risen up in red rebellion against a government, which, as against them, had sinned only in being too indulgent, standing here in the light of the Apostolic teaching, we may well be appalled at the unparalleled 'wickedness' of their enterprise—which may God confound! But neither will I, speaking as the minister of Him who perished on Calvary at the hands of those, whom, having lived to bless, He even died to save, forbear to add: 'Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.'*

* Luke 23 : 34.

Lecture XIV.

1 *Peter* 2 : 17.

'Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.'

'This,' says Leighton, 'is a precious cluster of Divine precepts. The whole face of the heavens is adorned with stars, but they are of different magnitudes, and in some parts they are thicker set than in others: thus is it likewise in the holy Scriptures. . . . Here is a constellation of very bright stars near together.'

The last of these precepts, '*Honor the king*,' seems plainly to imply that the writer has still chiefly in his mind the political duty of Christians, as inculcated in the four preceding verses. What is not so obvious is the bearing on that topic of the rest of this verse, and the mutual relation of its several parts. My own impression is, that the Apostle is here anticipating objections that might be felt, if not expressed, by his brethren to the spirit and tenor of the previous exhortation, and that, in doing so, he further explains and defines the exhortation itself.*

'What!' they might think, 'submit ourselves, we the heirs of the everlasting kingdom, to these wicked idolaters and persecutors, who fear not God, neither regard man,† but live

* Alford makes the first precept a general one, which is then immediately split up in this verse into three divisions, and the influence of which reaches as far as ch. 3 : 7. Besides other objections to this, it can scarcely be that Θεόν is merged in πάντας, (which Alford himself translates *all men;*) nor does this view satisfactorily account for the distinctions of the other clauses, or for the prominence assigned in the last clause to the political obligation.

† Luke 18 : 2.

apparently for no other end than to insult and defy the one, and degrade and oppress the other, while the special object of their jealous and relentless fury is the dear Church of our Lord! How shall we submit ourselves to their authority, without at the same time becoming partakers of their sins? Must not any attempt on our part to satisfy their demands, and so avert their wrath, prove a strong temptation to, if it does not necessitate, a corresponding abatement of what we owe in far closer and more sacred relations? Nay, shall we not rather do well to detest and despise these enemies of all that is good, and, though now forced in our weakness to an outward obedience, do what we safely may to thwart and humble the tyrants, while we lie in wait for the first fair opportunity to burst their yoke from our necks, and beat them down with the fragments?'

'No,' says Peter, in reply, as I suppose, to these unexpressed, but very probable, remonstrances and rebellious surgings of a natural resentment; 'what is demanded of you in regard to your civil rulers in no degree conflicts with your other obligations. Nor, were you even so disposed, would you be at liberty to exaggerate in your own conception the former claim, so as in the least to invalidate or impair any one of the latter. Be the spirit and practices of others toward you and your brethren what they may, no provocation of theirs, no evil example however general, no command from whatever source, will justify you in stifling or concealing the purer and nobler principles and sentiments of the Christian calling. While, therefore, I have been thus explicit and earnest in requiring your submission to every human institution, I now with equal distinctness and emphasis say: *Honor all* men. *Love the brotherhood. Fear God.* Indeed, a little reflection only is needful to find in these very injunctions both reasons for, and the necessary conditions of, the political course already prescribed, and to which I again point you, when, in perfect harmony with these supreme and unquestioned laws of the heart and life, I add, '*Honor the king.*'

It is true that, as the verse appears in our English Testament, it might seem rather to consist of so many distinct and independent statutes, having no living connection one with

another. But, besides that the interpretation of Scripture is never to be determined by the punctuation, it may be mentioned in passing, that in this case most editions of the Greek text and many versions avoid our punctuation by periods. That in the mind of the writer there did exist some such connection as I have sought to indicate between the several parts of the verse, as well as between the whole verse and the previous context, will perhaps become more obvious as we briefly glance at the clauses separately.

'*Honor all*'—not, all governors, as it has been sometimes explained,* nor even, as Bengel, all to whom honor is due,† but, simply, as in our version, all men. And the same latitude is probably to be given to Paul's word in Rom. 13 : 7, 'Render therefore to all their dues.' There *is* something due from us to every man, irrespectively altogether of his worldly circumstances, and of his intellectual or even his moral character. The debt may not be, as in the case of our rulers and superiors, one of tribute or custom or fear. But it does in every case include a love of benevolence, and the doing good unto all men, as we have opportunity,‡ and the sentiment, moreover, of a respectful consideration. At this time the great majority of human beings was neglected and despised by the wise and learned, as well as dishonored and oppressed by the rich and powerful and governing classes. It was the utterance of a new spirit, when Christ's Apostles proclaimed to God's redeemed children, the excellent of the earth, the duty of '*honoring all* men'—all sorts and conditions of men. They may have made themselves vile by their vices ; yea, vile in their own eyes. The poor drunkard, skulking at first from the observation of his neighbors, and all the while secretly hoping and resolving by a rigorous self-denial to recover his former position in society, finds by and by, after multiplied failures, that he has lost likewise his self-respect, and then, alas! he seeks refuge from the hot and bitter scorn of his own heart in the very delirium of renewed and

* Hensler. † 'Quibus honos debetur.' And so Bloomfield, etc.
‡ Gal. 6 : 10.

continuous excess. Even so, however, there is still that in him, which is rightfully entitled to honor from us. He is still a man—a partaker of the royal nature, which in its beginning was the image and reflection of the Divine—to redeem which from sin and misery the blood of God's Son was not too dear a price—and which now, in the person of that Son, has been 'caught up unto God, and to His throne.'* With feelings of reverence and awe the traveller gazes, not only on the crumbling shrine and hallowed dust of Iona, but on the ruins, accursed and hopeless though they be, of wicked Nineveh and proud Babylon. But here is a ruin in which God once dwelt, and in which He desires yet again, and eternally, to dwell. Surely it is not for those whom grace, and grace alone, has saved from a like degradation, to insult over the desolation, or even to pass it by with indifference. '*Honor all* men'—if not for what they have made themselves, at least for what the Creator and Redeemer designed them to be. Honor that kindly thought of God toward them by striving, as best you may, for its realization. And, when all your efforts seem to prove abortive, still honor it, and the objects of it, by your prayers and tears.

This precept of universal application is immediately followed by one of a more specific and limited character, '*Love the brotherhood*'†—that smaller, select community, to which also you belong, not as men, but as Christians—your brethren 'after the Spirit'‡—begotten of the same Father, and to the same inheritance, and meanwhile laboring with you under the same burden of the cross. Let not the fact that they are hated by the world and the world's rulers affect your feelings toward them, except, indeed, as it should deepen your sympathy, and stimulate your zeal in their behalf. In your required submission to civil magistrates, you must beware of even seeming to side with them against Christ's cause and people. His friends are your brethren. Own them, and love

* Rev. 12 : 5.

† ἀδελφότης. In the New Testament this word occurs only here and ch. 5 : 9.

‡ Gal. 4 : 29.

them, as such, and shrink not from identifying yourselves with them in all their interests.

Considering, therefore, this clause also in its relation to the immediate context, we can perceive a special propriety in its abrupt reënforcement of what had already been formally enjoined in ch. 1 : 22 : 'Having purified your souls in the obedience of the truth unto brotherly love unfeigned, out of a pure heart love one another intensely.'

And so the writer had already (ch. 1 : 17) called on those who claim for their Father the impartial Judge of every man, to 'walk, during the time of their sojourning, in fear.' But it is not simply a repetition of the same thought, in the shape of a random, isolated ejaculation, when here again he says, '*Fear God.*' Rather he would remind us that this is 'the beginning of wisdom' in all human relations—the central sun of the entire circuit of moral obligation, shedding influence all around. Fearing God, we shall honor 'men, which are made after the similitude of God.'* Fearing God, we shall love those on whom God has set His love, and to whom He has more closely allied us by adopting them with us into His own family, and giving to all the Holy Spirit, the earnest of the common inheritance. And finally, fearing God, we shall '*honor the king*'—all whom God has raised, as His representatives and vicegerents, to the high places of earthly rule.

We are thus brought back to the main topic of the present section, (vs. 13–17,) to wit, the duty of Christians to magistrates, the other clauses of the verse, as now explained, being intended to remove certain probable difficulties in the way of the hearty discharge of that duty, by quietly suggesting the needful cautions and limitations, as well as additional motives.

You will observe that of the various feelings here mentioned, honor, love, fear, it is, so to speak, the undermost and broadest, that is selected as appropriate to the political relation. 'My son, fear thou God and the king,' is, indeed, one of the words of the wise.† But, as distinguished in our text

* Ps. 111 : 10; James 3 : 9. † Prov. 22 : 17; 24 : 21.

from honor, fear is that sacred, religious awe in the presence of infinite perfection and supreme authority, which, carrying with it the sense of immediate and absolute subjection and dependence, is due from us to no creature that God has made. In the same sense, and with the same exclusive application, is the word used by our Lord: 'I say unto you, my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom you shall fear: Fear Him, which after He hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear Him.'* Does it not sound somewhat like an echo of that solemn voice, when one of those who heard it says, '*Fear God; honor the king*'? '*Fear God*,' and therefore '*honor the king*.' '*Honor the king*,' but '*fear God*.' Let no earthly dignity, not even the highest, stand for a moment in your eyes as in any case, or under any circumstances, the equal or rival of that which is Divine. The will of God is your law. Where He sends you, go; what He commands you, do; though all the tyrants of earth set themselves in threatening array against you. Will not God's smile compensate for their frowns? But in His frown what will their smiles avail?

Again; '*Love the brotherhood . . . honor the king*.' If the king himself belong to the brotherhood of Christian faith, you will then, of course, likewise love him as a brother. But even now, while that is impossible, and is not asked of you, you are nevertheless, were it only for the sake of the brotherhood, and that you may not aggravate their sorrows, to beware how you needlessly incur the suspicion, and provoke the wrath, of the civil power. An idolater he may be, or a blaspheming persecutor of the Church of God; still '*honor the king*.' Honor him, as you honor all men, as a man. Honor him also as king. But neither, as between him and your brethren, are you to carry your deference to royalty so far, as to withdraw from them your love, or to suppress its manifestation. '*Honor the king*,' but '*love the brotherhood*;' yea, 'lay down your lives for the brethren.'†

And lastly: '*Honor all men . . . honor the king*.' Recog-

* Luke 12 : 4, 5. † 1 John 3 : 16.

nizing the fitness and equity of the former requisition, you cannot, be your experience what it may of bitter wrong from your rulers, deny the reasonableness of the latter, when to the claim of a common humanity is added that of a Divine ordinance.—A similar connection of thought may exist in 1 Tim. 1 : 1, 2, where the writer, just after 'exhorting that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men,' specifies the single class of magistrates on account of their great influence in human affairs, and also, perhaps, because this was the very class likeliest at that time to be excluded from the sympathies of the Church : 'be made for all men ; for kings, and for all that are in authority ; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.' So here : '*Honor all men . . . honor the king*.'

And here, too, observe, we may, as in the other instances, change the order and relation of the two clauses, thus : '*Honor the king*,' and '*honor all* men.' See that you never so pervert or strain the former obligation, as to hold yourselves released from the latter. For those who have stood believingly before the cross, the value of a man must not be eclipsed by the splendor of earth's brightest diadem. Nor can even imperial power so depress and strip the meanest slave, as to leave him 'no rights which you are bound to respect.' Alas, for that basest utterance that ever fell, I think, from judicial lips ! Were that, indeed, the true reading of our country's Constitution, and not the frightfullest calumny on it, then would earth and heaven shout together in scornful triumph over its destruction.

But on the other hand, my hearers, you will allow me to add, that it will be well for us, in this day of our calamity, no longer to strive to hide from ourselves and from one another, what is only too apparent to all the world beside ; that this nation's great, crying—God grant that it be not fatal—sin has been its cruel, persistent disregard of the very first of the precepts that we have been considering. We have not '*honored all* men.' In unblushing defiance and mockery of our own declared and much boasted self-evident principles, millions of men—whole generations of men—every individual of

them as human as Washington himself, have been—oh! how dishonored, contemned, abused, trampled on, shut out from the blessed light of knowledge, and from all the securities and sanctities of marriage and home, bought and sold and worked and driven with the cattle of the field; yea, crushed down, the poor dumb immortals, so far as legal craft and brute force could do it, to the level of the beasts that perish. What though the victims of such a system were clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day? None the less should it be, to every man that has a man's heart within him, a thing abhorred, as 'earthly, sensual, devilish.'* And yet you do all know, that of late years this same system of outrageous wrong has domineered in this nation, in church and state and society, and that at the North scarcely less than in the South, until it had come to be almost universally regarded as one of the very best criterions of a man's prudence and fitness for honorable station in any sphere of life, that, if he could not fully and openly sympathize with the transcendent wickedness, he should at least have no difficulty in holding his tongue about it. Or, if he broke silence at all, it must be in denouncing the madness of the abolitionists, and the heresy of the higher law; whereas at one time these were really the only signs left to us, that on this subject the national conscience was not dead. No; there was one other such sign given, in the growing toleration of a bastard, infidel philosophy, with its sham proofs that the negro was rather a monkey than a man. The establishment of that point, it did seem still to be felt, was necessary, as Montesquieu long ago suggested,† to our own reputation.

And can you wonder, brethren, if God had not finally cast us off, and resolved on our ruin, that even His patience would endure this state of things no longer? You will not, I am sure, question my loyalty, though I should venture to tell you, that, while standing in awe of the Divine Presence in this

* James 3 : 15.

† *De l'Esprit des Loix*, xv. 5: 'Il est impossible que nous supposions que ces gens-là soient des hommes; parceque si nous les supposions des hommes, on commencerait à croire que nous ne sommes pas nous-même Chrétiens.'

rebellion— for doubtless God *is* in it, as well as Satan— I can yet at times rejoice with trembling that the great explosion has come. It needed, as I believe, but a few more years of uninterrupted sunshine in our old courses, to have corrupted and destroyed the nation beyond the reach of remedy. And now, all other milder remedies having failed, posterity will not reckon even these slaughtered thousands and lavished millions too much to have paid for her extrication, so it be thorough and perpetual, from the Dismal Swamp of iniquity and shame. Then, at last, let us fondly hope, the North having been cleared of its negro-cars and negro-pews, as well as the South of its whips and chains, the noble principles of the Declaration of Independence will receive their nobler embodiment and first historical illustration in all classes of this great land's teeming population ; and then too there will be less difficulty in understanding, and less risk in practising, the apostolic precept : '*Honor all* men.'

In the mean time, let us not fail to remark, as a signal instance of the way in which sin ever reacts to its own punishment, how the national violation of the one law, '*Honor all* men,' has ended in this wide-spread violation of the other, '*Honor the king*.' The government, which dishonored manhood in the slave, is now itself dishonored by the slaveholder. For the whole case, as I understand it, may be summed up in these few words. Yes ; the Jacob and Esau of American history—the hostile twins, liberty and slavery, which in the beginning strove with each other in the nation's womb—have now, after a long and hollow truce, met face to face, full-grown and full-armed both, and, in the presence of all the wondering kings and peoples, have closed in deadly grapple. For that, I again repeat, let every patriot praise God. While the struggle lasts, we have at least the comfortable assurance, that slavery and this government can never more be, or seem to be, friends. And shall it not be the prayer of all that, when the struggle is ended, the sun, as he looks down from his high path in heaven, over this fair, broad land, may descry no single slave in all our coasts ?

LECTURE XV.

1 *PETER* 2 : 18–20.

'SERVANTS, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.

THESE verses in the original maintain a structural connection with what precedes, and are, in fact, but a further development of that comely walk, or good behavior, among the Gentiles, which had been prescribed in the 12th verse, and which was largely to consist in a cheerful, conscientious submission to every human institution, (v. 13.)* The general principle is here applied to a particular class of the Christian brotherhood; one, it is probable, very numerous in the apostolic churches, and which, at least, comes into frequent prominence in the apostolic writings;† the class, namely, of '*servants*,' or, according to the derivation of the word‡ that Peter employs, *domestics*.

* To the common explanation of the participle as being here used for the imperative mood, one is not quite reconciled by having the anomaly called a Hebraism, (Hensler, Pott.) Nor, however convenient in translation, is there any real necessity for this exegetical shift. Ὑποτασσόμενοι is made dependent on v. 17 by Hottinger and De Wette; but the better connection (and the remark is equally applicable to the participles and adjectives of ch. 3 : 1, 7–9) is with ὑποτάγητέ of v. 13, (Cocceius, Bengel, Burton, Huther,) or say rather, with vv. 11–13, (Steiger, Wiesinger.) Comp. ch. 4 : 8, note 5, and Winer, p. 399, etc.

† 1 Cor. 7 : 20–24; 12 : 13; Gal. 3 : 28; Eph. 6 : 5–8; Col. 3 : 11, 22–25; 1 Tim. 6 : 1, 2; Tit. 2 : 9, 10; Philemon.

‡ οἰκέτης, from οἶκος, *a house*, or *household*. Hence in Acts 10 : 7 our version has *household servants*, though perhaps *members of the household* might there be the safer interpretation.

Now, while it is true that neither the etymology of the term, nor its usage, requires us to say * that this class in the present instance consisted altogether of slaves, yet, on the other hand, taking into account, not only what I believe to be the *prevailing* usage,† but the known constitution of society in that age, together with the whole spirit and tenor of the counsels that follow, and comparing these with the parallel ones in Paul's Epistles, we shall find little reason to doubt that slaves formed the great majority of those to whom the Apostle here addresses himself. It is quite certain that slaves at this time abounded, and that their general condition was depressed and miserable in the extreme. By the law they were refused all personal recognition, and expressly classed with dead things and quadrupeds.‡ Society equally excluded them from its sympathy and care. The power of the master was absolute and unquestioned, even to the arbitrary infliction of the most cruel punishments, and of death itself; and it needs no historical testimony to assure us, that such a power was continually and most wantonly abused. In fact, this same chattel-slavery and its inevitable concomitants, as they were one of the darkest and foulest features of the corrupt and declining Empire, were no less one main source of its weakness and peril and ultimate ruin.

Meanwhile, however, the grace of God had appeared among men, and by nothing did Christianity more clearly attest her heavenly origin, than when she turned her holy eye of love upon the slave, and, taking him by the hand, sat down beside him, and pressed him to her heart. Then, indeed, of these benighted outcasts from the protection and charities of the world it might be said, and with a double emphasis: 'The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.' The Apostles, I think, had them chiefly in mind, when

* With Augusti, Stolz, Meyer, De Wette, Davidson, etc.

† See, for example, Sept. Gen. 9 : 25, 26, where [*παῖς*] *οἰκέτης*=עֶבֶד עֲבָדִים; Esdr. 3 : 19, where it stands in opposition to *ἐλεύθερος, free;* the section *περὶ δούλων* in Sir. 30, [33,] etc.

‡ 'Pro nullis, pro mortuis, pro quadrupedibus'—such was their legal estimation.

they magnified the Christian calling as especially reaching and blessing the foolish, weak, and base things of the world, and things which are despised, and things which are not. God had 'chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom.' And so the slaves of men became the 'Lord's freemen.'*

But now, in these circumstances, there would readily arise in the mind of the slave himself certain doubts and questions. 'How is this great change to affect my present temporal relations? Must I, a child of God, a fellow-citizen with the saints, and of 'the household of faith,' born to glory, and honor, and immortality, remain still in bondage to this blind, brutal heathen, himself the bondman of Satan? True, I as yet see no way of escape from my ignominious thraldom; but can my conscience any longer acknowledge the obligation of service? Certainly, were my master too a Christian, I might then, with no less safety than propriety, assert in the family an equality that is on all hands conceded in the Church, where there is neither bond nor free.'

The temptation, you perceive, was as to its root identical with that which, as we formerly saw,† beset the primitive believer in the discharge of his duty as a citizen. And by many even now the present case of conscience would not be reckoned quite free from difficulty.

Some, indeed, there are in our day, and they too such as seek to figure in the front rank of reformers and philanthropists, who see no difficulty at all in the case. To the Roman, as to the American, slave they would have said: 'Why do you hesitate? Your tyrant master has been robbing you all your life, and has no rightful claim whatever on you or your services. Seize, then, the very first opportunity that offers, if not of avenging your many wrongs, at least of asserting and vindicating your natural right of freedom. If necessary to your escape, take, without scruple, your master's horse, or any other property belonging to him, and which, as being the fruit of your unrequited toil, is rather yours than his. Nay, should

* Matt. 4 : 16; 1 Cor. 1 : 27, 28; 7 : 22; James 2 : 5.
† See pp. 148, 151–2.

he surprise you in the midst of your preparations, or overtake you in your flight, and still attempt to hold you by force, then, in the last resort, make full proof of your manhood, and of your fitness for freedom, by laying the oppressor dead at your feet.'

Now, such an expression as this of the impulses of the natural mind may sound very fine and brave. At any rate, it is, as I have said, the advice which some of our philanthropists would have given. Yet, after all, it will be found to savor of the will of the flesh, not the mind of Christ. And so, when this point has been reached, as one of the last and purest developments of anti-slavery zeal and magnanimity, as well as of our grand modern revolutionary gospel of liberty and equality, it is no more than consistent that the Bible should be quietly dropped, and sometimes even vauntingly discarded as rather a poor, mean-spirited affair. For indeed, brethren, it can in no wise be denied or concealed, that the advice given in this book to slaves by the wisdom and the love of God was the direct opposite of all that. Let us hear Paul:

'Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. Art thou called being a servant? care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather'—that is, as now commonly understood: If you can in a lawful way obtain your freedom, do so, rather than remain a slave. But the older explanation, adopted also by several of the best modern interpreters, makes Paul say: Even in that case, you will do better in present circumstances, and for the credit of the Gospel, by continuing as you are.* 'For he that is called in the Lord being a servant, is the Lord's freeman; likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant. Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men. Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God. . . . Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling'—it is no cowardly, servile dread, however, that the Apostle inculcates, but a conscientious religious anx-

* This view is ably defended by Alford; and perhaps the question must be regarded as somewhat doubtful.

iety to do their duty *—'in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. . . . Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh;' that is, in all lawful things; in all things not forbidden by the higher law of God; as is sufficiently evident by what follows: 'not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: and whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. . . . Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor'—that is, of all the respect and obedience that belong to them as masters—'that the name of God and His doctrine be not blasphemed,' evil-spoken of, as encouraging insubordination in families. 'And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren'—in other words, let them not presume, on the ground of the new relation of Christian brotherhood, to treat their masters or their commands with a bold, contemptuous indifference—'but rather do them service, because they who receive the benefit' of this improved service 'are faithful and beloved.† These things teach and exhort. . . . Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again; not purloining, but showing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.'‡ In beautiful accordance, too, with these uniform teachings of the Apostle was his own conduct, in sending back the fugitive but now believing Onesimus to the service and brotherly confidence and love of his Christian master, Philemon.

There is, then, no mistaking the spirit and general drift of

* See 1 Cor. 2 : 3; Phil. 2 : 12, etc.

† The true construction of the original.

‡ See the references, p. 160, note †.

what Paul says on this subject; and I have recited it at length, as furnishing the best illustration and confirmation of Peter's corresponding instructions in the passage before us.

'*Ye servants*, be *subject*'—or, as in v. 13 and often elsewhere, *submit yourselves*—'*in all fear to your masters*.'* That this fear, however, was not to be, as I said before, any vulgar, slavish apprehension, but rather such a serious earnestness and solicitude as must ever attend a deep religious sense of responsibility to God, is obvious from the whole tone of the address, and from the fact that the feeling is required in all cases alike—even in those where there was no danger of harsh treatment. And, you must again take notice, that this essential quality of Christian submission to our earthly superiors carries with it also the necessary limitation of the submission itself. It must be such a submission as does not conflict with a supreme, controlling fear of God. But then mark likewise, that this is the only limitation. 'Not only,' says Peter, '*to the good and gentle*'—and doubtless there were such masters then, as there are now; whether their better character was owing to natural temperament, or to the influence of Christian principle and Divine grace—'*but*,' adds the Apostle, '*also to the frotward*,' or, as the word is,† *the crooked, perverse*. And then, on this latter case, as being the more difficult of the two, he dwells at length in what immediately follows.

'*For this* is *thankworthy, if for conscience toward God one*'—any one, servant or other—'*endureth griefs, suffering unjustly*.'‡ The supposition includes three conditions—unjust suffering; the patient endurance of it; and that '*for conscience*

* Οἱ οἰκέται, ὑποτασσόμενοι ἐν παντὶ φόβῳ (Sin.: ἐν παντὶ φόβῳ ὑποτ.) τοῖς δεσπόταις, (Sin. adds ὑμῶν.) In such a case the English pronoun may be regarded as an idiomatic equivalent for the Greek article. So our version at ch. 3 : 1, 7, etc. By the Syriac, οἱ οἰκέται is taken absolutely: *And those servants that are among you;* by Erasmus, Calvin, and a few others, as the nominative to ἔστωσαν understood: *Let servants be*, etc.

† σκολιός.

‡ εἰ διὰ συνείδησιν Θεοῦ ὑποφέρει τὶς λύπας, πάσχων ἀδίκως. The indicative mood suggests the case as not merely a possible, but an actual one. Comp. ch. 4 : 14.—The plural, *griefs*, occurs in our version, Is. 53 : 4, and even in the sense here intended,=*grievances*, is common in our older literature, nor is it yet obsolete.—The only instance of ἀδίκως in the New Testament. The adjective is, always, in our version, *unrighteous* or *unjust*.

toward God,' or from a sense of God's providential control in human affairs, and a regard to God's will, approbation, and glory.*

It is not, therefore, any hypocritical, or timid, or simply prudent submission to wrong, that is here commended; not the fawning obsequiousness that would seem to take delight in its own degradation, nor yet a sullen yielding to what is inevitable, nor the passive resignation of despair, nor even the fortitude of a stoical heroism; but the thoughtful, meek, unresenting, unrevengeful patience of Christian faith and hope; the patience of a soul that 'endures,' because it 'sees Him who is invisible,' and converses with that which is eternal, and so loses the sense of the present smart and shame in the consciousness of a loyal, filial obedience, and in the anticipations of coming deliverance and a glorious reward.† Whatever befals such a soul—however for the time not joyous, but grievous—and from whatever quarter the trial proceeds; whether from the fire of God, or a great wind from the wilderness, or the sword of the Chaldeans, or the tongue of Shimei, or any other manifestation of 'man's inhumanity to man'‡—the believing heart accepts, yea, welcomes it, as in all its forms the allotment of an all-wise, almighty, loving Father, and as part of its own needful preparation for the final rest. The Apostle would have his poor brethren arm themselves with this overcoming power, and to all 'the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune'§ oppose the shield of faith. Their sufferings might be no less unjust than they were severe. But so much the more illustrious would be their victory, and so much greater their 'fame in heaven,'‖ and the joy of their eternal recompense. The endurance in such a spirit of such sufferings is, says our text, '*thankworthy*,' or, according to the margin, *thank*.**

It cannot certainly be meant that any claim of merit is thus established on the Divine favor, though Roman Catholic

* Comp. the phrase *συνείδησιν Θεοῦ* with the Greek of ch. 3 : 21; Luke 6 : 12; Rom. 10 : 2; 1 Cor. 8 : 7.

† Heb. 11 : 27; 2 Cor. 4 : 17, 18.

‡ Burns. § Shakespeare. ‖ Milton.

** See Luke 6 : 32–34; which Peter, Bengel thinks, had in his mind.

writers have sometimes been willing to interpret the word in that sense.* But Peter had not forgotten that caution of his Master : 'So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants : we have done that which was our duty to do.'† The expression he employs is the very common one ‡ so often rendered *grace*, and so it is here likewise explained by some : *This is grace—a gift, or notable effect, of grace.*§ Perhaps, however, this is equally to strain the matter in the opposite direction. The true idea, I doubt not, is brought out in the next verse, where the very same word is translated by *acceptable*. The statement then is, that the patient endurance, for the sake of God, of injustice at the hands of men, however it may be misunderstood and despised by the world, is in the sight of heaven a grateful, *acceptable thing*—a sacrifice of a sweet-smelling savor.

In the 20th verse this statement is still further enforced, and applied to the case on hand. That verse might be given thus : '*For what credit* || is it, if, *when ye do wrong and are buffeted,*** *ye shall bear* it *patiently? but if, when ye do well and suffer, ye shall bear* †† it *patiently, this* is *an acceptable thing with God ;*' *with God*, it is here added, as if to make clear and certain what was meant before ; *with God*, however your noble humility may be overlooked, however it may be scorned, by those around you ; *with God*, who knows all your sorrows, and counts all your tears, and will not forget the re-

* Nic. de Lyra : *opus supererogationis ;* Martini : *cosa di merito.*

† Luke 17 : 10.

‡ *χάρις.*

§ A suggestion of Corn. a Lapide, Er. Schmidt, Cocceius, Gill, Scott, Jachmann, etc.

|| *κλέος*—one of the many words peculiar to Peter among the New Testament writers.

** *ἁμαρτάνοντες καὶ κολαφιζόμενοι.* The primary meaning of the first verb, as of the corresponding Hebrew one, (חָטָא,) is to *miss the mark ;* and so '*wrong* is merely *wrung*, or *wrested* from the right or ordered line of conduct,' (Tooke, cited by Richardson.)

†† *ὑπομενεῖτε*, in both clauses. There is here a curious agreement among the versions to disregard the time ; only three or four out of a large number that I have consulted, retaining the future in both instances. Our translators seem to have followed Erasmus : *sufferetis . . . suffertis.*

verence and love, which amidst them all ye 'show toward His name;'* *with God,* whose favor is dearer far to you than aught besides, and whose judgment alone shall stand. Patiently to bear a deserved punishment is, indeed, of itself a becoming thing; but one which ordinary human nature can understand, attain to, and sympathize with. It is not, therefore, so very wonderful, and can look for no special acknowledgment from God or man. But to bear violent and repeated injustice patiently is altogether a higher strain—such as can spring only from 'conscience toward God'—a conscience enlightened by the truth, and quickened and fortified by the motives, of the everlasting Gospel. Chief among these motives is the example of Christ Himself; which, accordingly, is brought out in glowing relief in the remaining verses of the chapter, and which it will be well for us to reserve for separate, future consideration.

In the mean time, you will notice that our first conclusion, with regard to the servile condition of those here addressed, is amply confirmed by what is said of the rude and cruel treatment to which they were exposed, and to which the Apostle counsels them to submit. Allow me, therefore, in conclusion, to add a few general remarks explanatory of what I conceive to be the New Testament way of looking at this whole sad subject of slavery, as it affects ourselves. I am well aware of the hazard of such an attempt. Our ears have been so long accustomed to extreme statements and passionate invective from all sides of the controversy, that one who refuses resolutely to pronounce either the *shibboleth* of the one party, or the *sibboleth* of the other, is very apt to incur suspicion and denunciation from both. However, the Lord is our Judge, and His word our law. We are not likely, I think, in this matter or any other, to discover for ourselves either a higher morality, or a more exquisite prudence, than that of Christ and His Apostles. 'To the law,' then, 'and to the testimony.'†

I. Now, in the first place, the Bible itself has, you know,

* Heb. 6 : 10. † Is. 8 : 20.

been often appealed to in justification or palliation of the system of slavery, as it exists by law and in fact in our own country. On this I have two remarks to make.

1. Those who are fondest of making this appeal habitually overlook, or are extremely careful to conceal, the fact, that whatever argument or inference can legitimately be drawn from the Bible in defence of the slavery of black men is every whit as valid in defence of the slavery of white men. The idea that color has aught to do with the right or the wrong of the question is simply an additional baseness of the modern mind, having been utterly unknown to ancient times. From Genesis to Revelation you find not one reference to it; for the miserable trash about Ham and his descendants is not deemed worthy of serious mention in this place. Let the Sabbath-school deal with it. And, in point of fact, neither the servitude of the Old Testament, nor the very different system of Greece and Rome, made any such ridiculous distinction. Granting, then, that the Apostles speak to slaves, be it remembered that they speak to white slaves, equally as to black; or rather the vast majority of those slaves belonged to the former category. Probably, were this duly considered, and especially were the old impartial practice reproduced among ourselves, the Apostles would suddenly lose some small portion of their popularity with certain despisers and abusers of the colored race—as it is absurdly enough called.

2. My second remark is, that, when you hear the Bible quoted as the champion of the slave-system, you will do well to recal distinctly to mind what that system is in our day, no less than in the apostolic age. Of course, the system is just what the law makes it, and allows it to be. But, as formerly in heathen Rome, so now in Christian America, the fundamental principle of the system, as declared by statute and judicial decisions, is that the slave is a thing with no personal rights whatsoever—to all intents and purposes a chattel personal, like a wagon or a horse; and who can doubt, that the damnable theory is often but too faithfully illustrated by the practice? Whoever, then, shall say that the Prophets of God, or our blessed Lord and His Apostles, ever countenanced by word or act such a theory or such a practice as that, need

scarcely be defied to make good his assertion. He will, in truth, succeed merely in showing that he himself is destitute of a moral sense.

There were, in fact, very many most vicious habits and institutions throughout the Empire, which the glorious Gospel of the grace of God did not assail openly and by name. Did it, therefore, sanction any one of them? Nay, rather it announced principles, and breathed into the soul of man a spirit, that must sooner or later dissolve them all. It came not to scatter, as with the force of a tornado, the mists of hell then brooding over all the earth; but, like the rising sun, it looked upon them, and, wherever its influence penetrated, they slowly, but surely, faded beneath its eye.

Thus it proclaimed the unity of the race, and the essential equality of all men in the sight of God—their common ruin by sin—their common redemption by Christ. It did not expressly command the master to emancipate his slave. But it led him into the presence, and placed him at the feet, of his own Master in heaven, with whom is no respect of persons; and there he finds sitting next to him his poor, down-trodden, or perhaps till now unthought of, dependent, the object, equally with himself, of the Divine sympathy. Before the face of the compassionate Jesus, their tears of contrition and of grateful joy meet and mingle. They are sprinkled with the same blood of reconciliation, and sealed with the same Holy Spirit, and, with hearts subdued at once to humility and love, they eat of the same bread, and drink of the same cup. Who does not feel, that whatever hitherto was bitter, corrupting, and debasing in the relation existing between these two men has already passed away for ever; that the inward life has gone out of it; and that, as the breath of God gradually transforms society into 'a new lump,'* the relation itself, in its old form of a legal perpetual constraint, is not likely long to survive? Such, accordingly, is the well-known history of slavery's decline and ultimate disappearance in European Christendom. And our shame and horror is just this, that in a land, which boasts itself as preëminently the home of free-

* 1 Cor. 5 : 7.

dom, the blessed process has to so deplorable an extent been reversed, while the Church of God in the midst of us has looked calmly, if not complacently, on at the hideous spectacle, or at best has turned her face from it, and given no adequate utterance to the indignant grief and stern protest, which it should have aroused in every honest and unperverted conscience, being all the while absorbed in the work of suppressing wine-drinking, and dancing, and in converting the world. So much for the first of the two extreme views to which I before alluded.

II. The other is that which regards even the outward form of the relation in question as in all cases so inherently sinful, as to require its immediate and absolute exclusion from the Church. On the one hand, it refuses to the master, who may utterly abhor and repudiate the dehumanizing theory, and the brutal practice resulting from it, but for reasons satisfactory to himself simply declines to manumit, all recognition as a Christian disciple ; and, on the other hand, it encourages the slave, by whatever crafty or violent methods, to escape from or burst his bonds.

Now, all this I hold with no less firmness to be a clearly unscriptural extravagance. No exegetical ingenuity can reconcile it with apostolic teaching, or the discipline of the apostolic churches. Few things, in my opinion, are more historically certain as to the constitution of those churches, than that they embraced many, who, while they rejoiced to feel that they were one in Christ, yet continued to stand to each other before the law as slaveholders and slaves. The former, though taught to forbear threatening, and to treat their slaves with justice and equity, were not required to emancipate them, as an indispensable preliminary to their enjoying the fellowship of Apostles ; but the latter *were* required to submit themselves to their masters, and to please them well in all things. The truth, which had made them ' free indeed '—free with ' the glorious liberty of the children of God ' *—was thereby only to make them better servants—more willing, and cheerful, and faithful. For now in all their service of their earthly masters,

* John 8 : 36 ; Rom. 8 : 21.

at home and abroad, everywhere and at all times, it was their privilege to know that in a far higher sense they might rather be said to 'serve the Lord Christ;' and what mere change of earthly station could confer honor or happiness to be compared with that? The friend and follower of Him who was meek and lowly in heart, and who Himself came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, could no longer feel himself degraded by the humiliations of his daily lot. Nay, he thus became like his Lord, and was enabled to enter more deeply into the fellowship of His sufferings.

In this spirit did apostolic Christianity deal with the slave; and I fully believe it to be still the wisest and kindest way of dealing with him. All this, however, be it remembered, does in no degree whatever impair the strength and sacredness of the obligation that presses upon us, as citizens of this great republic, to do what we can, by all lawful methods, to limit and destroy a system so prolific of sin and misery to all concerned, and so fatal to the peace and security of the state, as that of American Slavery.

Lecture XVI.

1 *Peter* 2 : 21–25.

'For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth: who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously: who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.'

The Apostle has just been encouraging servants—most of whom, no doubt, were at that time slaves—to submission and patience under the hardships and wrongs to which they were exposed, by a repeated assurance that such a spirit and deportment was 'an acceptable thing with God.' In the verses which now lie before us he makes good this assertion by showing them that, difficult and painful as the duty was, their obligation to it was really embraced in their calling of God to be the followers of Him who, by His own meek endurance of unmerited suffering, had both saved them, and set an example for their imitation. On this great example, therefore, as presenting at once the best pattern of obedience and the most persuasive motives, the writer, according to apostolic custom, dwells with a fond amplification.

'*For unto this* were ye called*'—the Divine calling being but the manifestation of the Divine purpose, as another Apostle had long before explained that, both by word and by

* εἰς τοῦτο. Our version inserts *even*, for no other reason, it would appear, than that Tyndale, Cranmer, and the Bishops' Bible, have *verily*, and Beza has *etiam*.

letter, to the Thessalonians.* Few considerations, it is obvious, were so well fitted to engage the ready assent of the children of God to any precept whatever, as a conviction that what was thus required was expressly contemplated in the eternal plan of their Father's love, and so formed an essential part, whether as a condition or a result, of their Christian calling. Both ideas, accordingly, meet us everywhere in the New Testament, as when the disciples are exhorted to peace, or purity, or general holiness,† or, as here, to patience under trial. That 'we must through many afflictions enter into the kingdom of God'‡—that of these afflictions a large proportion would spring immediately from the wickedness of men—but that in all cases alike the necessity rested ultimately on the Divine ordination—these were among the more familiar topics in the teaching of that age. The calling of the Church, therefore, to God's 'kingdom and glory'§ implied her calling to present suffering—undeserved, patient suffering—as the only road thither. But that on which our Apostle especially insists, as in itself a sufficient confirmation of the nature in this respect of the calling, is the fact, that here is the royal road—the King's highway—in which the King Himself was a traveller.

'*Because Christ also suffered for us.*'‖ On one occasion, when 'Jesus began to show unto His disciples, how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed,' this same 'Peter took Him, and began to rebuke Him, saying: Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.** Very different were his views and his feelings now. Now, like Paul, he glories in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.†† Says he: '*Christ also suffered*'—Christ, the blessed Master, the loving Saviour of us all, He too suffered, O suffering saints! Where He sends you, He Himself first led the way. He voluntarily suffered—suffered not only from God's justice, but from the cruelest injustice of man, and so in that point also was tried

* 1 Thess. 3 : 3, 4. † Rom. 8 : 29, 30; 1 Cor. 7 : 15; 1 Thess. 4 : 7, etc.
‡ Acts 14 : 22, (*πολλῶν θλίψεων.*) § 1 Thess. 2 : 12.
‖ Instead of *Χριστὸς ἔπαθεν*, Sin. reads: *ὁ Χριστος ἀπέθανεν.*
** Matt. 16 : 21, 22. †† Gal. 6 : 14.

even as you are. Nay, in *all* His sufferings He was personally innocent—innocent, as none of us will quite claim to be in *any* of ours. That He suffered at all was owing solely to the love He bore to us. When, therefore, you are tempted to resentment or despondency under unmerited pains, lift your eyes to 'Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith.'* He '*also*' suffered unjustly, in that He suffered, not for Himself, nor for aught that He had done, but '*for us*'—in our stead, for our sakes, for our salvation. In what way Christ's sufferings inure to our so great benefit, I shall remind you presently. But the general statement, that it was for us He suffered, you will at once joyfully admit. And I would now particularly have you understand, that one thought of Christ in His vicarious suffering was, to teach you how to suffer. He suffered, '*leaving us*'—*leaving behind* Him, as He went to the Father†—'*an example*'—*a writing-copy, or sketch*, the word ‡ originally means—'*that ye should follow*'—*closely, intently follow*—'*His footsteps.*' § True, those footsteps lead far down into the valley of humiliation. Yea, all over it, and in its lowest, darkest depths, you will find them, wet with His tears and blood. But follow them none the less earnestly—none the less confidently. For they also lead through it, and out of it; and they are the footsteps of the Son of God, our Saviour.

By glancing at the margin, you will see that there is a doubt as to the exact reading of this verse. Instead of '*Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example,*' ‖ many have *Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example,***

* Heb. 12 : 2.

† *ὑπολιμπάνων*—Bengel, 'in abitu ad Patrem'—occurs nowhere else in the New Testament.

‡ *ὑπογραμμὸν*—another of Peter's *ἅπαξ λεγόμενα*. Comp. 2 Macc. 2 : 28, and Clem. Alex. *Strom.* v. 8. *ὑπογραμμός παιδικός*.

§ *ἐπακολουθήσητε τοῖς ἴχνεσιν αὐτοῦ*. The Syriac='*in* His footsteps' is striking, and has been often followed. But it is not favored by the other instances of this verb with the dative, (1 Tim. 5 : 10, 24.) Still, the *ἐπί* is no doubt emphatic.

‖ So Erasmus, Stephens, Beza, Mill, Wells, after several ancient versions (including the Syriac) and a few cursive MSS., (mentioned by Pott. Huther thinks B may perhaps be added.)

** So the Elzevir, Bengel, Wetstein, Griesbach, Knapp, Meyer, Steiger, Hahn, Lachmann, Theile, Alford, after Sin. A, B, [according to Lachmann,] C, besides cursive MSS., the Amiatine Vulgate, etc.

and others still, *Christ also suffered for us, leaving you an example.** As in every other such case of disputed readings, the question fortunately is of no importance to the settlement of any Christian truth. But, on the whole, the last of these variations is perhaps to be preferred ; the sudden resumption of the second person being easily enough accounted for from the special design of the context. That was, you recollect, to guide and comfort the most depressed and helpless class of believers—and with them, of course, all believers—when subjected to injurious treatment. Now, with this immediate end in view, it was very natural for the writer to say, as he thought of the meek, unmurmuring, self-sacrificing Christ, '*Christ also suffered for us*—for us Christians, for all of us ; and, in doing so, *He left you an example*—you especially, ye despised and outraged slaves.' To my mind this reading, which implies a slight contrast in the pronouns, is not a little confirmed by the fact of their juxtaposition in the original, which stands thus : '*Christ also suffered for us, to you leaving an example.*' It may be added that a similar change of person is of frequent occurrence in these writings of Peter—another instance being even found here in the 24th verse.†

But now let us attend the Apostle in his nearer contemplation of the example itself.

And the first essential point is *the innocence of the Sufferer*, which is, therefore, again and more directly asserted : '*Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth.*' The language is borrowed from the 53d chapter of Isaiah ;‡ nor is this, we shall find, by any means the only marked allusion which these verses contain to that wonderful prophetic description of the Man of Sorrows. Only more wonderful is the precise historical realization of its every feature in the

* This is favored by the margin of Bengel and Griesbach, and is adopted by the Complutensian, Matthaei, Scholz, Bloomfield, Tischendorf, after G, J, cursive MSS., the Clementine Vulgate, etc. It will be observed that the weight of authority greatly preponderates in favor of ὑμῖν, 'leaving *you*,' etc.

† See also ch. 1 : 3, 4 ; 4 : 1 ; 5 : 10 ; 2 Pet. 1 : 4, 19.

‡ According to the Alexandrian copy of the LXX., except that Peter substitutes ἁμαρτίαν for ἀνομίαν.

Man Christ Jesus ; as, for instance, of this the most wonderful feature of all, to wit, absolute sinlessness. For here was no case of a merely comparative excellence. He, whose 'visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men,' was God's 'holy Child Jesus'—'that holy thing' born of the Virgin—the 'clean thing out of an unclean,' to whose production no power was equal but that of the overshadowing Spirit.* From the very midst of a world lying in wickedness, as well as over it, rose this Sun of Righteousness, and the keenest and most malignant scrutiny of eighteen centuries has detected in Him no spot, no darkness at all. In the wilderness, immediately after His baptism, and in the hour and power of darkness just before His death, the accuser of God's children came, and found nothing in Him. And with what a glad consenting testimony do the Apostles celebrate this glorious distinction of the world's Redeemer! He 'knew no sin,' says Paul.† 'In Him is no sin,' says John.‡ He '*did no sin*,' says Peter. His heart and His life were equally untainted and pure. God Himself, though He 'putteth no trust in His saints ; yea, the heavens are not clean in His sight,' looked on the lowly 'friend of publicans and sinners,' and owned Him for His Son, and proclaimed the paternal joy. §

'*Neither was guile found in His mouth*,' adds Peter, still making his own, and as it were adding the stamp of his personal knowledge and experience to the witness borne so long before by the evangelical seer to the character of Messiah. For in that particular also our Lord Jesus fully answered to the ancient portraiture. He proved to be the 'perfect man, who offends not in word.' Often as His enemies sought to 'entangle Him in His talk,' they recoiled shattered and abashed before the 'simplicity and godly sincerity' with which He spake. He was 'the Amen, the faithful and true Witness'—faithful to God—faithful to man. His word was ever like the heavens, in its transparency as in its depth—'as it were the body of heaven in His clearness.'‖ Nor yet

* Is. 52 : 14 ; Acts 4 : 30 ; Luke 1 : 35 ; Job 14 : 4. † 2 Cor. 5 : 21.
‡ 1 John 3 : 5. § Job 15 : 15 ; Matt. 11 : 19 ; 17 : 5.
‖ James 3 : 2 ; Matt. 22 : 15 ; 2 Cor. 1 : 12 ; Rev. 3 : 14 ; Ex. 24 : 10.

merely without guile was His speech. Oh! how kind, and patient, and tender, and merciful was it. 'Grace was poured into His lips;' and well might His countrymen, in their ignorance of the infinite fulness whence flowed the unfailing, calm, pellucid, refreshing stream, 'wonder at the words of grace which proceeded out of His mouth.'*

Nor did this Divine grace show itself in His discourses alone. He 'went about doing good.'† His whole life was love. And He died for the world's salvation.

Such was Christ; so innocent, so loving, so beneficent, both in word and deed. And yet, says Peter, you know how He suffered—suffered from the world's ingratitude and hatred—a hatred truly without a cause.‡

Consider, then, in the next place, *how He bore His sufferings.*

'*Who, when reviled, reviled not again; when suffering, threatened not.*'§ In neither clause is the reference to any single occasion, but in both, as the original plainly indicates,‖ to the habitual provocations and trials that marked His whole history.

He was '*reviled.*' According to His own sorrowful anticipation in the 69th Psalm, 'they that sat in the gate spake against Him; and He was the song of the drunkards. . . . Reproach,' said He, 'hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness.' Trembling demons did, indeed, confess Him to be 'the Holy One of God.'** But from human lips there was breathed a cloud of foulest insult and calumny around 'the Son of the Blessed'—the 'holy, harmless, undefiled'††—as He passed on His brief way through this evil world. A man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber—a vain boaster, and false pretender—a profaner of the Sabbath, and a dishonorer of the

* Ps. 45 : 2; Luke 4 : 22, (*τοῖς λόγοις τῆς χάριτος.*) † Acts 10 : 38.

‡ John 15 : 25. § *λοιδορούμενος . . . πάσχων.*

‖ *ἀντελοιδόρει* (this verb occurs nowhere else in the New Testament; and this fact may have led to the reading of Sin., *ἐλοιδόρει*) . . . *ἠπείλει.* In the above translation, it will be observed, the relative is made the nominative also to the second verb. This is the more proper, as the relative construction is continued

t verse.

: 4 : 34. †† Mark 14 : 61; Heb. 7 : 26.

temple—a companion of wicked men—nay, Himself a blasphemer, and a demoniac—such were the imputations flung at 'the Man who is God's fellow.'* Nor did the malignant storm abate even in the presence of His cross. 'They that passed by reviled Him, wagging their heads. . . . Likewise also the chief priests mocking Him, with the scribes and elders. . . . And they that were crucified with Him reviled Him.'†

Now, what the Apostle would have his brethren, when evil-spoken of, and especially the slaves, under the contemptuous abuse perhaps hourly heaped on them, remember, was the manner in which their Saviour had met the worst forms of obloquy. *He 'reviled not again'*—'rendered not railing for railing.'‡ Sometimes by earnest instruction and expostulation He sought to convince His enemies of their sin, and save them from the guilt of its repetition.§ As often, perhaps, 'He held His peace, and answered nothing.'‖ And when at the last He opened His mouth on Calvary amidst the pitiless jeers of His murderers, it was in prayer to His Father, that they might be forgiven.**

For as, '*when reviled, He reviled not again*,' so '*when suffering*' the more violent inflictions of malice and rage—the purple robe, the crown of thorns, the smiting, the scourging, the nails, the cross—still He '*threatened not*'—assumed no frown of wrathful majesty—kept back the crowding legions of angels—manifested no gleam either of the Divine justice, or even of human anger. 'He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter.'†† What God-like composure! What almighty patience and self-control! Or let us say, what a triumph of filial resignation and faith! For what says the text?

'*But committed* Himself'‡‡—not merely His agonized body,

* Zech. 13 : 7. † Matt. 27 : 39, 41 ; Mark 15 : 32.
‡ 1 Pet. 3 : 9. § Matt. 9 : 4, etc. ; John 10 : 34, etc.
‖ Mark 14 : 61. ** Luke 23 : 34. †† Is. 53 : 7.

‡‡ This reflexive interpretation of *παρεδίδου* is preferred by Winer, De Wette, and others, and is defended by reference to Mark 4 : 29 ; Sept. Josh. 11 : 19, as read by the Complutensian and Aldine editors from A ; and the frequent use in Greek of active verbs in an intransitive or reflexive sense. Very many, however would supply differently : *His judgment* or *cause*, (so the English margin aft Tyndale, the Syriac, Calvin, Beza, Bengel, etc.,) *vengeance* or *punishment*, (s

or His departing spirit,* but His cause, His all, and, in particular, the determination of the question of His guilt or innocence, the whole matter as it stood between Him and His adversaries—'*to Him that judgeth righteously.*' And you all know—this also is implied—how speedily and how gloriously the decision of His unrighteous judges was reversed. When the Father raised Jesus from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand, then was this truth among many others thereby sealed and established for ever, that the patient endurance for His sake of wrongful suffering is 'an acceptable thing with God.'

So far, you perceive, it is all as if to these heavy-laden brethren the Apostle had said: 'Behold the Man! Consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.'†

But Peter well knew, and would not for one moment suffer them to forget, that the wondrous career of the Master was not altogether for the sake of an example. Other and deeper relations there were, in which it was, indeed, unique and inimitable, but which only the more powerfully commended and enforced the example, as that had now been displayed. '*Who Himself*'‡—Himself alone, without rivalry or coöperation of any sort—'*bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.*'

Here we have the fuller explanation of what was said before about Christ's '*suffering for us.*' Let us look carefully at the old familiar phrases, that, if possible, we may freshen our sense of their blessed import.

'*Who bare our sins.*' The word rendered *bare*, which means, first, to *bring* or *carry up*, (Matt. 17 : 1; Luke 24 : 51,

Erasmus, Cranmer, Geneva, etc.,) *it*, that is, τὸ λοιδορεῖσθαι τὸ πάσχειν, His wrongs, (so Luther, the Dutch, Hammond, Huther, Wiesinger, etc.,) *them*, His wrong-doers, (Alford.)—The Vulgate *tradebat autem judicanti se injuste* (=Kenrick, *delivered Himself up to him* [Pilate] *who judged Him unjustly*; as if reading ἀδίκως) is chiefly interesting as being one of the peculiarities of that version, which Roman Catholic interpreters cannot agree to defend. Estius attributes it to the ignorance of copyists, and Kenrick passes it in silence.

* Luke 23 : 46. † John 19 : 5; Heb. 12 : 3. ‡ αὐτός.

etc.,) is hence often used, as in v. 5 of this chapter, to express the *offering* of sacrifice,* and this as well without, as with, the addition of *on the altar*. In like manner, another classical meaning of the Greek verb, *to take up on one, sustains*, (for example, war or distress of any kind,) occurs with simply *sin* for the object, as when we read, (Heb. 9 : 28,) 'Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many.'† Now, the only point in which the present case differs from this last one, is the extension of the idea by the words, '*in His own body on the tree*.' And this circumstance it is, no doubt, that led Luther,‡ in accordance with the second usage specified, to introduce the very harsh representation, for which I am not aware that any Scriptural parallel can be adduced, *offered our sins in His own body on the tree*, and has led very many others § to go back to what I mentioned as the primary signification, *bore—bore up—our sins in* ‖ *his own body to the tree;* Col. 2 : 14 being sometimes given in illustration, and the tree itself often thought of as an altar. To conceive of the cross as an altar, however, is scarcely in the style of the New Testament, whose occasional use of *tree* for the cross ** rests on Deut. 21 : 23, (Gal. 3 : 13,) 'He that is hanged [on a tree] is accursed of God,' and invariably suggests the naked, penal idea of a gibbet. But, on the other hand, we can by no means let go the sacrificial force of the phrase *bearing sins*, as it meets us twice in the very chapter of Isaiah, (53 : 11, 12,) from which our Apostle is here so largely, though tacitly, quoting.†† As the sins of the Israelite were symbolically transferred to the victim, so on the head of this Lamb of

* See also Heb. 7 : 27; 13 : 15; James 2 : 21. The Septuagint thus uses *ἀναφέρω* for הֶבְרִיא, 2 Chron. 29 : 31; for הִקְרִיב, Lev. 3 : 14; Deut. 1 : 17; for הֶעֱלָה, Gen. 8 : 20; Lev. 14 : 20.

† So the Sept., for נָשָׂא, Numb. 14 : 33; Is. 53 : 12; for סָבַל, Is. 53 : 11.

‡ Followed, I think, only by Thomson and Grashof.

§ From Castalio and Beza to Wiesinger.

‖ The *ἐν* is omitted by Sin.

** Acts 5 : 30; 10 : 39; 13 : 29.

†† The Syriac, accordingly, long ago assumed a *constructio prægnans,=bore our sins, and lifted them in His body to the cross*, and this explanation has of late been revived by De Wette and Huther. But there is no necessity for regarding the case as any thing more than the very common one of *ἐπί* with an accusative,

God were laid, in dark, dread reality, the sins of us all, and all our sins, the least and the greatest. Amazing burden! Yet He bore it. And it crushed Him down into death. For He bore it—not as Aaron, in the substituted bodies of sheep and oxen brought to his hand by the transgressors—but '*in His own body,*' prepared of God; His whole person, body and soul together. And He bore it '*on the tree*' *—dying that death of the curse—the felon's death—the slave's death. It is true, our Lord's vicarious suffering was not confined to the period of the crucifixion. But faith is thus directed to the cross, as presenting not merely the historical termination and climax, but the legal and indispensable completion of all the rest. 'Without shedding of blood is no remission.† Nor was the forgiveness of sin at the bar of God the only effect contemplated in this great sacrifice. An ulterior result, and one no less glorious, was the inward change to be wrought in the sinner himself: '*that, dying* ‡ *to sins, we might live to righteousness.*' Some, I am aware, understand this of the change in the believer's legal relations—of his passing from under the condemning power of sin to a life under the influence of a justified state;§ or, as others, to life through the righteous-

when the verb of motion, appropriate to such a construction, is suppressed, and is to be only mentally supplied: *have our sins in His own body* [when lifted] *upon the tree.* Comp. Rev. 4 : 4, *they had* [placed] *upon their heads*, etc.; Sept. Ex. 29 : 38, where, after ἐπὶ τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου, we have in the same connection ἐπὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριον; Is. 56 : 7, etc.—Alford seems to combine Luther's idea with that of the Syriac.

* ξύλον, *wood, timber.* But, while in ordinary speech our word *tree*, uncompounded, (for *cross-tree, roof-tree*, etc., are common enough,) does not carry this meaning, the old English use of it in the present relation occasions no difficulty, I believe, to the plainest reader, but is just as readily understood as Spenser, *Hymn of Heavenly Love*, 153–4:

> 'At length Him nayled on a gallow-tree,
> And slew the Just by most unjust decree.'

† Heb. 9 : 22.

‡ ἀπογενόμενοι—here only in the New Testament—is sometimes rendered *deceased, discharged, removed from.* But the other interpretation, which is as old as the Syriac and Vulgate, is justified by classical use, the Pauline parallel, (Rom. 6 : 2, 11,) and the correlative ζήσωμεν.

§ Brown; who takes both datives as instrumental: 'that we dying by sins might live by righteousness.'

ness of Christ.* Both these ideas are most precious truths, but in the text they are both rather taken for granted, than expressly exhibited. What Peter here holds up to view, as a motive to the performance of all moral duty, is the purpose and influence, not of Christ's personal righteousness, but of His expiatory death, in destroying the dominion of sin within our nature, and quickening the soul with the new life of holiness—that radical spiritual revolution, which Paul in almost every Epistle loves to celebrate as effected in believers through the death of their Surety, or, to use his own phrase, 'in the body of Christ's flesh through death.'† Thus, for himself, Paul gloried only in the cross, not merely as the pledge of pardon and peace, but as the instrument no less of sanctification.‡ And with a like immediate reference to the Saviour's death and resurrection, as a source of vital power in the Church, he would say to his brethren : 'Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.' § For this was then, and is now, the right estimate of all true Christians.

But mark, finally, with what gentle address Peter, still thinking of that 53d of Isaiah, (vs. 5, 6,) again turns, and applies what he has been saying to the poor slaves themselves : '*By whose* ‖ *stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray :*** *but have*†† *now returned to the Shepherd and Bishop*' —that is, *Overseer* ‡‡—'*of your souls.*'

* The Syriac, followed by Wakefield, Burton, and the Swiss version, (Lausanne, 1849.)

† Col. 1 : 22. ‡ Gal. 6 : 14. § Rom. 6 : 10, 11.

‖ Lachmann cancels the *αὐτοῦ*, on the authority of A, B, C, Sin.[2]

** Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford, read *πλανώμενοι*, (Sin. A[1], B,)=*ye were going astray as sheep.*

†† The aorist passive of *ἐπιστρέφω* has a middle force throughout the New Testament ; Matt. 9 : 22 ; 10 : 13 ; Mark 5 : 30 ; 8 : 33 ; John 12 : 40, [Acts 28 : 27 ;] 21 : 20.

‡‡ It is not doubted that the term *ἐπίσκοπος* was by this time in common use in the Church as a ministerial title. If, then, the main thing here were the transference of this title to the Lord, whatever word is employed to render it in that sense elsewhere ought to be retained here. The misfortune is, that the word *bishop*, which, says Richardson, 'upon the introduction of Christianity found its way into all the European languages,' nowhere carried along with it the import of its Greek etymology, (*ἐπί*, *σκοπέω*,) *inspector*, *overseer*. That *this* thought, how-

The word for *stripes* * properly denotes the marks of blows, or the tumors raised by scourging—that other slave's punishment; to which, also, Jesus submitted, when He 'gave His back to the smiters.'† But here and in Isaiah it doubtless represents the entire 'chastisement of our peace'—the sum of Christ's sufferings on our behalf, whence proceeded, in the marvellous processes of grace, healing for all our maladies and woes. 'All we like sheep had gone astray; we had turned every one to his own way;' when, lo! the smitten Shepherd reappeared on the heavenly hills, and 'called His own sheep by name.'‡ Among those who earliest heard His voice, and, looking back from the wilderness, came thronging into His presence, were these benighted, perishing wanderers. And now at last, beneath the inspection of His eye, and the saving strength of His right hand, their weary souls, for which no man had cared, found safety and rest.

ever, was at least the more prominent in the mind of the Apostle, may be inferred from the connection of *ἐπίσκοπον*, without an article, with *ποιμένα*, and from the close relation in which *ποιμένα καὶ ἐπίσκοπον*, with one article, stands to souls returned *as sheep* from their wandering. The same view is confirmed by the joint occurrence of the kindred verbs in ch. 5 : 2, and in a similar relation.

* *μώλωψ*—here used collectively; like חַבּוּרָה, for which it stands in Sept., Is. 53 : 5. It does not occur elsewhere in the New Testament.

† Is. 50 : 6.

‡ John 10 : 3.

Lecture XVII.

1 *Peter* 3 : 1–7.

'Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement. Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.

These verses deal with another, and the last that is here specified, of those social relations of the natural life, in which the writer would have his brethren deport themselves in such a way as would be likely to disarm prejudice, silence calumny, and commend their new faith to a jealous and observant world. In the original, accordingly, there appears to be still kept up a grammatical connection with the middle of the preceding chapter.* Let us first go over the passage with some care, before speaking generally of the subject matter.

'*Likewise*'—the main thing insisted on hitherto in the other cases being the duty of submission—'*Likewise, ye*† *wives, submit yourselves*'—for the word is the same as before‡—'*submit yourselves*'—of course, in the Lord, or with a con-

* Comp. p. 160, note *.

† See p. 165, note * Lachmann cancels *αἱ*, (after Sin. A, B.)

‡ *ὑποτασσόμεναι.* See p. 165.

trolling regard to the Divine authority—'*to your own husbands.*' Too much stress has sometimes been laid on this expression,* as if an opposition were intended to other men, or other women's husbands.† But it is also an extreme to take all emphasis out of it, and, instead of '*your own husbands,*' to say simply *your husbands.*‡ The writer, we may well believe, meant to suggest the peculiar and exclusive intimacy of the marriage relation as one motive to submission.

And another such motive is the happy influence which the Christian wife might thus exert on her husband, and that in the worst supposable case—'*that, even if some disobey the word*'§—the word of God's truth and grace by Jesus Christ, that word whose regenerating, purifying, and nourishing energies, (ch. 1 : 22, 23 ; 2 : 2,) you have yourselves experienced, and which you therefore delight to recognize as your supreme law—'*that, even if some disobey the word*'—have thus far stood out stubbornly against its invitations and commands—'*they may without the word be won*'‖—won from heathen darkness and the bondage of Satan for Christ, and as your own inseparable companions in the coming kingdom—'*by the conversation,*' or *behavior*** '*of the wives.*' Blessed reward, surely, of a magnanimous patience and humility! What other gain could be so dear to your loving hearts?

But how, you will ask, could this result be anticipated '*without the word*'? Can any thing take the place of the Gospel, as the instrument of human salvation? The difficulty

* τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν.

† So Estius, Calovius, Benson, Bloomfield, Steiger, (who cites from Calovius what the latter had borrowed with slight change from Estius and Huther then errs in ascribing to Calvin.)

‡ So (or similarly, *their husbands*) the older English versions, and most foreign commentators, including Winer and De Wette.

§ καὶ εἴ τινες ἀπειθοῦσι. The general rule respecting the reference of the emphatic καί to what immediately follows holds good also in its combinations with other particles, as καὶ εἰ, (for which see Hartung i. 140–1 and Kühner § 340, 7,) εἰ καί, (see on v. 14,) etc. In such cases the English version is apt either to drop the καί, (as in 1 Cor. 7 : 21, where the omission helps not a little to conceal what some believe to be the Apostle's meaning,) or, as here, to displace it.—ἀπειθοῦσι; as in ch. 2 : 7. Comp. p. 234, etc.

‖ Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford, read κερδηθήσονται, (the uncials, including Sin.) On the occasional occurrence of a future subjunctive, see Winer, p. 70.

** See p. 132, note †.

is rather evaded, than fairly met, by limiting the result, as has sometimes been done, to such a preliminary conciliation of the unbelieving husband, as will secure for the Gospel a calmer and less prejudiced hearing. The better and more common solution is suggested by a peculiarity of the original phraseology, which might be represented thus: 'that, even if some disobey the word, they may *without word** be won by the behavior of the wives;' that is, without word of yours, whether in the way of remonstrance, or argument, or exhortation, or entreaty.

And this interpretation, you will notice, is confirmed by what follows: '*beholding*† *your chaste behavior*,' your untainted purity of life and conversation, so different from what they are used to see in heathen families around, and yet leading to no assumption of superior airs on your part, but, on the contrary, 'joined *with fear*,'‡ or a sincere respect and reverence for their own persons and authority.

It is clear, therefore, that the Apostle would have these women seek to influence their husbands rather through the eye than the ear—by the daily appeal of what an old Greek commentator calls 'voiceless work,' which, says he, is 'stronger than unworking speech.'§ Or, as the same idea is expressed by the great English dramatist:

> 'The silence often of pure innocence
> Persuades, when speaking fails.' ‖

And to the same effect our text goes on to intimate, that such a spirit and deportment as is here enjoined on Christian wives is, indeed, by far their best and richest adornment. '*Whose be*'**—so the 3d and 4th verses might be rendered;

* ἄνευ λόγου. Bengel: 'priore loco *denotatur evangelium*: deinde, *loquela*:' 'In the first instance the Gospel is meant; in the second, talk.' The antanaclasis has long been recognized. Thus, the Syriac=*without trouble*; as if reading ἄνευ κόπου.

† ἐποπτεύσαντες, (Sin.: ἐποπτεύοντες.)

‡ τὴν ἐν φόβῳ ἁγνὴν ἀναστροφὴν. Comp. the φοβῆται of Eph. 5 : 33.

§ Œcumenius: ἄφωνον ἔργον, κρεῖσσον ἀπρίκτου λόγου.

‖ Shakespeare, *Winter's Tale*, ii. 2.

** ὧν ἐστω. The ordinary construction, which governs ὧν by κόσμος, and supplies another κόσμος to ὁ ἔξωθεν, is not that most readily suggested by the Greek arrangement. Nor is there any good reason for subverting the natural order.

or, *And let yours be**—'*not*† *the outward adorning of plaiting of hair,*‡ *and wearing of gold,*§ *or putting on of garments,*‖ *but the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptibleness of the meek and quiet spirit,*** *which is in the sight of God of great price.*' With this compare Paul's very similar words to Timothy,†† which we can scarcely doubt our Apostle had in his eye: 'I will . . . that women adorn themselves in modest'—orderly, decorous ‡‡—'apparel, with shamefacedness §§ and sobriety; not with braided hair'—literally, *not in plaits* ‖‖—'and *** gold, or pearls, or costly raiment,††† but, which becometh women professing godliness, by ‡‡‡ good works.'

Now, I certainly need not caution you against supposing, that either of these passages was designed to encourage a sordid meanness or careless slovenliness in female attire. But it were also to mistake their spirit, to regard them even as forbidding any particular style of dress or of ornament whatsoever, consistent with the modesty of nature, and, according to the usages of society, befitting the position and circumstances of the wearer. What both Apostles meant to condemn was that excessive care about such matters—that undue absorption of mind and heart, time and substance, in the business of mere bodily decoration—which is said to have been in all ages the easily besetting sin of female vanity. It

The exegesis given above, though rejected by De Wette's *Gefühl*, and Wiesinger, as 'too abstract and flat,' rests on the familiar use of *εἰμί* with the genitive, (comp. Matt. 5 : 3, 10; Acts 1 : 7, etc.,) and is adopted by Cocceius, Bengel, Hensler, Steiger, Huther, and others.—Alford governs *ὧν* by a *κόσμος* supplied from the one expressed.

* The immediate antecedent being *ὑμῶν*.

† The demonstrative pronoun of the English version is copied from Beza.

‡ *ἐμπλοκῆς τοιχῶν*.—For *τριχῶν, καί* Lachmann reads *ἤ*, (C.)—*περίθεσις, ἐμπλοκή, ἔνδυσις*, are not found elsewhere in the New Testament.

§ *χρυσίων, articles of gold.* ‖ *ἱματίων*.

** *ἐν τῷ ἀφθάρτῳ τοῦ πραέος καὶ ἡσυχίου πνεύματος*, (Sin. : *ἐν ἀφθ. τοῦ πραέως ἡσυχίου πν.*) Lachmann reads *ἡσυχίου καὶ πραέος*.

†† 1 Tim. 2 : 9, 10. ‡‡ *κοσμίῳ*.

§§ According to the genuine form of the word in the older English versions, and in the original edition of the common version.

‖‖ *ἐν πλέγμασιν*.

*** Alford: 'Perhaps from the *καί*, the gold is supposed to be twined among, or worn with, the plaited hair.'

††† *ἱματισμῷ*. ‡‡‡ *διά*.

is, indeed, a pitiable folly and shame for any woman to dress beyond her means, or so as to have little or nothing left for helping forward the cause of God or man in this world of sin and suffering, and this perhaps with the secret purpose of giving others the impression, that her means are greater than they are. But, be her means what they may, it is none the less a somewhat sorry occupation for a creature endowed with a reasonable soul, and called to inherit eternal life, to spend a large part of her brief existence on earth in watching the caprices of fashion, and tricking out in gold and feathers and such like gewgaws what Scripture calls that 'body of our humiliation,' which must so soon 'say to corruption, Thou art my father: to the worm, Thou art my mother and my sister.'* And yet I fear the case is by no means an uncommon one. Nay, would it be too great boldness for me to venture to ask, whether it is an altogether inconceivable thing that such interest as is taken by many a frivolous, empty-headed person in the Sabbath and the sanctuary, is mainly aroused by the fact, that sometimes these most blessed ordinances of the love of God our Saviour furnish the best opportunity for exhibiting her new bonnet to the admiration, if not the envy, of her neighbors!

Poor and base, however, as is such a temper in any rational being, remember that in a professed follower of the homeless Wanderer, who wore the seamless garment and the crown of thorns, it assumes a much darker and more unseemly aspect. An Apostle could not then think of it without amazement and a calm, lofty scorn. '*Whose be*'—that is, let your concern, characteristic, distinction be—'*not the outward adorning of plaiting of hair, and wearing of gold, or putting on of garments*,' however numerous and elegant. If these things are fairly and honorably at your command, still set not your heart on them, and be chaste and moderate in their use; or, if they are beyond your reach, care not for that. In either case, maintain and manifest a spirit superior to them, and undazzled by their fascination; so that, wherever you are spoken of, the first thought shall not be of your external grandeur and gay attire.

* Phil. 3 : 21, (τὸ σῶμα τῆς ταπεινώσεως ἡμῶν;) Job 17 : 14.

'*But*'—here is the appropriate object of *your* care and study—'*the hidden man of the heart*'—what Paul so often speaks of as 'the inward man,' or 'the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. . . . renewed unto knowledge after the image of Him that created him.'* For neither is Peter thinking simply of the soul as opposed to the body, or of some one of its natural faculties. There is not one of these, that sin has not defiled and darkened. He is addressing Christian women, and is explaining what becomes them, and is expected of them, as such. By the phrase before us, therefore, he means to designate the soul as regenerated—made 'a new creature'† in Christ Jesus. And this great change, both in its origin and immediate spiritual results, is a '*hidden*' thing. It cometh not with observation. It vaunteth not itself—seeks not to walk in any vain show before the eyes of men.‡ As it begins in '*the heart*,' the innermost and central part of our being, so ever after it has its seat of influence and control there, and thence rules over all the issues of life. For sooner or later the whole '*man*'—our entire nature—attests its reality and power; not at all, however, in the abrogation of the original distinctions and corresponding duties of the sexes, but in enabling both the man and the woman rightly to discern, and joyfully to fulfil, their respective parts and mutual obligations.

Now, one of the fairest fruits and evidences of Divine grace in the soul is a '*meek and quiet spirit*'—a spirit that deals gently with others, even their faults and provocations—is not swift to take offence, or explode in passionate resentments—refrains from all arrogant interference with its neighbor's rights and duties, and moves contentedly, unobtrusively, and without disturbance or struggle, within its own allotted sphere. This feature, therefore, of '*the hidden man of the heart*,' is here, in accordance with the special matter in hand, singled out as peculiarly the attribute and glory of Christian wives;

* Rom. 7 : 22; 2 Cor. 4 : 16; Eph. 3 : 16; 4 : 24, (*ὁσιότητι τῆς ἀληθείας*;) Col. 3 : 10, (*εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν.*)

† 2 Cor. 5 : 17; Gal. 6 : 15.

‡ Ps. 39 : 6; Luke 17 : 20; John 3 : 8; 1 Cor. 13 : 4.

and you will mark the two excellencies by which it is commended to their choice.

First, its *incorruptibleness*. In all cases, and particularly, says Peter, in yours, '*the hidden man of the heart*' lives and moves and has his being '*in the incorruptibleness* * *of the meek and quiet spirit*,' or in the meek and quiet spirit which is incorruptible, not subject to decay or death, waxing not old, but continuing ever fresh and young, 'after the power of an endless life.' † What an advantage does this one quality give it over what our Apostle in the first chapter calls 'corruptible things, silver or gold,' yea, over all the fading gayeties and splendors of the corruptible flesh!

And then, secondly, '*the meek and quiet spirit*,' however it may be unnoticed or, when noticed, despised, by the rude or the fashionable world, '*is in the sight of God of great price*.' It is the very 'gem of purest ray serene,' ‡ that shone on the person of God's dear Son. And if the Saviour, by fastening it with His own hand on your redeemed nature, has thus drawn to you also the loving eye of His Father, you can well dispense with the gaze and idle admiration of such as look only at the outward appearance, and not upon the heart.

The writer next proceeds still further to strengthen his exhortation by citing the example of the most honored and honorable of the sex. '*For thus*'—by the possession and culture of this same '*meek and quiet spirit*,' that I commend to you—'*thus of old did the holy women also, who hoped in God*'—hope in God being in all ages one sure mark of the true saint, and that which lifts the soul out of the snares and bondage of temporal things—'*adorn themselves, submitting themselves*'—as a necessary manifestation of that spirit, and as is now required of you, their successors in the hope and sanctity of the everlasting covenant—'*to their own husbands*.' §

* Many, from Pagninus to Brown and Alford, supply κόσμῳ to ἀφθάρτῳ,=*the incorruptible ornament;* not, therefore, as our common version, in apposition with it. But the better construction is to take ἀφθάρτῳ as a neuter adjective used for a noun, and so itself governing πνεύματος.

† Heb. 7 : 16. ‡ Gray's *Elegy*.

§ Οὕτω γὰρ ποτὲ καὶ αἱ ἅγιαι γυναῖκες αἱ ἐλπίζουσαι ἐπὶ τὸν Θεὸν (Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford, read εἰς Θεὸι) ἐκόσμουν ἑαυτὰς, ὑποτασσόμεναι κτλ. Sin. inserts ἐκόσμ. ἑαυτ. before αἱ ἐλπ.

Foremost in this group of venerable matrons stands the wife of him whom we of the Christian Church willingly revere as 'the father of us all.'* She too, therefore, having been a partaker of his faith, may fitly claim recognition as the mother of 'the Israel of God;'† and, accordingly, her case, in this respect at least the most illustrious, is quoted particularly: '*As* ‡ *Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord.*' One occasion, on which she called him so, is recorded in Genesis, (18 : 12,) and may be here alluded to, but only as revealing in that one expression the habitual tone and tenor of her wedded life.§ Whatever might be in other relations the imperfections of her character, in her loving loyalty and modest submission to her husband she was no unsuitable pattern for all her children, both those after the flesh, and those after the spirit.

To the latter class belonged most of those to whom Peter was writing, and the phraseology he employs in this instance, as in so many others, was doubtless intended to certify his hearty acquiescence, as the Apostle of the circumcision, in the full adoption of the Gentile believers into all the dignities and privileges of the household of faith. What he says is, not exactly, '*Whose daughters ye are, so long as ye do well,*' but rather this, '*of whom ye are become children, while doing well.*'‖ Gentiles by nature though you are—obscure and base as may have been your lineage—you can now, as the friends and followers of Him whose day Sarah, as well as Abraham, rejoiced to see afar off, rightfully claim spiritual kindred with the old Hebrew princess, and in proof of this your filial relation—not as the condition of it—you perpetuate her moral likeness, and

* Rom. 4 : 16. † Gal. 6 : 16. ‡ ὡς=*as, for instance.*

§ The same thing is perhaps implied in the aorist from ὑπήκουσε, as if Sarah's whole course as Abraham's wife might be summed up in one act of obedience. De Wette compares 1 Cor. 9 : 20 and Gal. 4 : 8. Lachmann and Steiger, indeed, read ὑπήκουεν after B,—the Vulgate *obediebat, used to obey;* like ἐκόσμουν, *used to adorn,* of v. 5.

‖ ἧς ἐγενήθητε τέκνα, ἀγαθοποιοῦσαι. So the Vulgate *estis* is changed in other Latin versions into *factæ estis.* The Dutch note on *geworden zijt* of that version is: 'That is, ye effectually show that ye are become; as John 15 : 8.' The explanation of ἐγενήθητε as having the force of a future (Semler, Pott, and one or two others) is quite needlessly countenanced by Green's remark: 'It may be safely said that this peculiar case is the only one in which the indicative mood of this tense has any concern with future time.'

reproduce in your lives whatever was graceful and excellent in hers, and is no less suitable to your own profession and prospects ; '*doing well*' in every relation of life, and especially by the faithful discharge of these duties of the married life, '*and not fearing with any terror*,' or '*not fearing any terror*,'* whether from your heathen husbands, or heathen neighbors, or any other quarter. While the Apostle would fain have the women of the Church to be womanly, he had no wish to see them effeminate, starting at vain alarms, indulging in hysterical excitements, or even dismayed in the presence of such real dangers as might meet them in their course of well-doing, and seek to scare them out of it. '*The meek and quiet spirit*,' that is so dear to God, is by no means the feeble, the listless, or the cowardly one. Nor is it any natural, but a gracious temper, springing from the peace of reconciliation, and from '*hope in God*,' and for that reason longing to please and glorify Him in the cheerful performance, and calm endurance, of His will. The effect of Divine grace in the soul of man or woman is, not at all to abate the force, or repress the activity, of any one of its powers, but on the contrary to strengthen, at the same time that it hallows, them all, and directs them, within the appropriate sphere of each individual, to the best results.

And, in spite of all the dismal talk about Woman's rights,

* *μὴ φοβούμεναι μηδεμίαν πτόησιν.* The objective interpretation of *πτόησιν* (in the New Testament only here) is favored by the Septuagint, Prov. 3 : 25, whence the Apostle seems to have taken both the phrase and the construction, and is given by the older English versions, and very many others.—Some (as Bengel, Burton, Halin, Brown) refer the latter half of this verse, *ἁγαθοποιοῦσαι κτλ.*, along with *ὑποτασσόμεναι*, to *ἐκόσμουν* of v. 5, and treat what intervenes of v. 6 as parenthetical. But as, on the one hand, this leaves the statement, *of whom ye are become children*, in a somewhat bald and abrupt isolation, so, on the other hand, the conditional, subjective *μὴ . μηδεμίαν* (not *οὐ . οὐδέμίαν*. Comp. p. 40, note** and p. 382, note ‡) would fitly introduce what might be properly assumed respecting those brought into, and still continuing to occupy, such a relation. For the same reason I connect the participles themselves, not with *τέκνα*, (in which case, indeed, the gender would none the less be determined by the sense,) but immediately with the subject of the verb ; and this is indicated above by the use of an intermediate particle, *while*.—Whatever difficulty there may be in determining the meaning of the last clause is certainly not to be avoided by taking *καί* as intensive : '*Even* when you fear nothing, and have nothing to fear'='Do what is right, and that without the compulsion of fear ;' the sense adopted by Schöttgen, Schleusner, Stolz, and a few older interpreters.

by which not only Scripture teaching and example have been set at naught, but the common sense and feeling and patience of society have been outraged of late years, it remains as certain as before, that the proper sphere of the woman—her sphere of duty, of safety, of honor and blessing for herself and others—is, in regard to her own husband, not one of rivalry, or resistance, but of willing, loving subordination. On this general topic, however, I shall reserve further remark, till after we have considered the duty of the husband, as stated in the next verse.

Meanwhile let every woman that hears me understand unto what she too is called of God in the Gospel—even to an adorning such as the mines of earth cannot purchase, for it is of God's own jewels—to a nobility of rank, greater far than to have sprung from the loins of kings—to emulation with all holy women of past ages—to a hope in God, that will at once supply the most powerful motive to a beneficent life, the surest preservative against the fear of evil, and the strongest consolation in the hour of weakness and sorrow. It was the Virgin Mother, of a 'meek and quiet spirit,' who with other women like-minded, 'stood' with troubled, yea, pierced heart, yet steadfast and undaunted still, 'by the cross of Jesus,' when His more boastful disciples 'all forsook Him and fled.'* Oh! how many Tabithas since that day have lived and died, 'full of good works and almsdeeds which they did!'† And of the noble army of martyrs not a small proportion has been drawn from the same 'highly favored'‡ sex; which will probably be found at last to have furnished the vast majority of the saved.

Behold, then, dear friends, the distinctions, holy and incorruptible, to which you likewise, the mothers and daughters here present, are invited to aspire. Turn not from them and pass away, till you have at least brought yourselves to think seriously, whether the world and its fleeting fashion can produce aught worthier of your ambition, or that will even bear comparison with them.

* Luke 2 : 35; John 19 : 25; Matt. 26 : 56. † Acts 9 : 36.
‡ Luke 1 : 28.

Lecture XVIII.

1 *Peter* 3 : 1–7.

'Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement. Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.'

In resuming the consideration of this passage, I propose first to examine what is said to husbands in the 7th verse, and then to confirm and illustrate Peter's statement of the relative duties both of husbands and wives from the larger teachings of Paul.

The construction and interpretation of the 7th verse are not free from difficulty. How, for instance, is the wife's inferiority in strength a reason why honor should be given to her? This question has sometimes been met by referring to 1 Cor. 12 : 22–24, where the Apostle speaks of our 'bestowing more abundant honor' on such members of the body as 'seem to be more feeble,' and are accounted 'less honorable.' But we shall get a better solution, I think, as well as a more satisfactory idea of the whole sentence, by rearranging the clauses, as is now commonly done, in this way:

'*Ye husbands, likewise*'—for neither must you fancy that you are lawless, independent despots; you, too, are under obligations no less strict to your wives—'*dwell according to knowledge with the female vessel as the weaker*, yielding them *honor, as being also heirs with* them *of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.*'*

It is common in Scripture to represent all the creatures as God's instruments or vessels. They belong to Him, having been created by Him for His own use and glory, and containing no more of what is good and valuable than He puts into them. And in a very special manner is this true of the children of His grace—'the vessels of mercy,' as they are expressly called.† In this class are included men and women alike, there being neither male nor female in Christ Jesus. But this gracious equality by no means subverts the original constitution of nature; and so the inspired writer speaks, as of a thing that may be taken for granted, of the female as the weaker vessel. This he does certainly, without intending thereby the slightest disparagement or offence to the sex, or to any particularly strong-minded or strong-bodied member of it. It is no insult to the vine to say, that it is weaker than the tree to which it clings; or to the rose to say, that it is weaker than the bush that bears it. The strongest things are not always therefore the best—either the most beautiful or the most useful.

* οἱ ἄνδρες ὁμοίως, συνοικοῦντες (in the New Testament, only here. Here, too, Sin. substitutes συνομιλοῦντες, and omits κατὰ γνῶσιν. For the syntax, see p. 347, note 1) κατὰ γνῶσιν, ὡς ἀσθενεστέρῳ σκεύει τῷ γυναικείῳ, ἀπονέμοντες (the last two words also do not occur elsewhere in the New Testament) τιμὴν, ὡς καὶ (transposed and mistranslated in the common version. Comp. p. 186, note §) συγκληρονόμοι (Stephens, Tischendorf, and some others, read συγκληρονόμοις, after Sin. [which adds ποικίλης before χάριτος,] the Vulgate, and some Fathers and cursive MSS.,=*heirs with* you.) χάριτος ζωῆς, κτλ. Strictly, σκεύει belongs to ἀσθενεστέρῳ, not to γυναικείῳ; nor is it governed immediately by συνοικοῦντες, but stands in apposition with another σκεύει understood to γυναικείῳ;=*dwell with, as the weaker vessel, the female.* Our translators followed the older English versions, Luther, Erasmus, etc.

† σκεῦος=בְּלִי. See Acts 9 : 15; Rom. 9 : 21–23; 2 Cor. 4 : 7; 2 Tim. 2 : 20, 21. The metaphor is not, as some have supposed, applied in our text to the wife on the ground of her relation to the husband. The mention of her as the *weaker* vessel shows that he too is thought of under the same figure.

And now mark the kindly purpose of this allusion to the wife's comparative weakness. Assuming also that husbands and wives do dwell together in close and life-long union, the exhortation then is, that '*husbands dwell according to knowledge with the female vessel as the weaker;*' knowledge, we might say, of whatever it becomes a Christian man to know, but especially and more immediately knowledge of the facts about the wife that are mentioned in this verse. There is first the fact of this very weakness of the woman, the knowledge of which,* so far from tempting the man to a rude or tyrannical exercise of his superior strength, should rather engage that strength for her shelter and defence, and operate as a perpetual appeal for a patient and tender forbearance toward even her faults and failures. And, alongside of this, there is the far greater fact, that, be her weakness what it may, she is none the less on that account, but equally with the man himself, a '*vessel*' in the house of the Lord. Nay, if it be his own highest dignity, to be an '*heir of the grace of life*'—an heir, that is, of 'the grace coming to us,' as our Apostle had described it in the first chapter, 'at the revelation of Jesus Christ,' and which unspeakable gift of God's favor to this world of sin and death shall consist of life, life in the full sense of the blessed word, life perfect and eternal and Divine—if, indeed, it is for this that the Christian husband is waiting, as the loftiest attainment of which his nature is capable, then let him remember that even in this also he is but the fellow-heir of his Christian wife, or else that she, even if now an unbeliever, may yet be a fellow-heir with him. And what influence shall *this* knowledge have on his bearing toward her? Not only 'does the hope of eternal glory make men generous and gentle,† but, wherever God puts so great honor on any child of the dust, though it be the meanest of beggars or slaves, all who partake of that hope will not fail to '*yield honor.*' And how much

* The Greek arrangement (for which see p. 196, note *) seems designed, not merely to give emphasis to *ἀσθενεστέρῳ σκεύει*, (Huther,) but to bring this into closest connection with *κατὰ γνῶσιν*.

† Bengel: 'Gloriæ æternæ spes facit generosos et mites'—understanding the joint heirship to be that of all believers.

more freely and gladly will they yield it, when they with whom the hope is shared are even now the partners of their bosom! You thus perceive that what is required to secure the right discharge of the husband's part, is simply that he '*dwell with*' his wife '*according to knowledge.*'

And then, as a motive to all this, at once weighty and beautiful, it is added: '*that your prayers be not hindered.*'* By some this is understood as enforcing what has been said to wives, as well as to husbands, and it may no doubt be fitly used in that way. But, as it lies in the text, it is addressed directly to husbands; though, since they, as such, are the heads and priests of their families, there may still be a special reference to family prayers, or to prayers with and for their wives.

Speaking generally, however, the Christian, while in this world, has no more precious interest to look after than his prayers—none which it more behoves him to maintain in healthful and unobstructed efficiency. And that which hinders prayer, whether we regard the spirit and habit of it, or its prevalence with God, is sin. Nay, the wilful indulgence in a course of sinning, in any direction whatever, is clearly incompatible with the devotional spirit, and must paralyze, or, as some take the Apostle's word to be, *cut off*, the soul's communications with the mercy-seat—the source of its life, and strength, and joy.† Nor again is there any one social sin that more directly tends to this fatal result, than the disregard and violation of what a man owes in that tenderest of all his social relations—his relation to his wife.

But the true nature of that relation, and what it involves of duty and of blessing for both parties, will be better understood, if we extend our view, as was proposed, in the second place, to Paul's general treatment of the same topic.‡

This, you will find, turns mainly on the analogy, presented

* For ἐγ-(Sin.: ἐν-)κόπτεσθαι, *to be cut into, hindered*, some (Erasmus, Stephens, Beza, Tischendorf) read ἐκκόπτεσθαι, *to be cut out* or *off*.

† Comp. on ch. 4 : 7.

‡ See 1 Cor. 6 : 16, 17; 11 : 3–16; 14 : 34, 35; Eph. 5 : 22–33; Col. 3 : 18, 19; 1 Tim. 2 : 11–14; Tit. 1 : 5.

by the marriage relation to the relation existing between Christ and the Church. In the very beginning, as Paul plainly intimates, the latter 'great mystery,' being itself the ultimate purpose of God in creation, was symbolized and foreshadowed, when 'the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof. And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made He a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said: This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.'* Marvellous type, indeed, of the yet more marvellous unity in which the Church stands with her Lord! She too has been taken from the pierced side of the Second Adam, the Slumberer in Joseph's sepulchre. Of His resurrection-life it is that she partakes, for He, the Living One, liveth in her; and her peerless destiny is to sit for ever on His throne, queen of the new creation of God. So perfectly is she even now joined unto the Lord, that she is one spirit with Him; and not only so, but in language, whose glowing energy thrills the heart of faith, however dimly the understanding may discern its precise import, we are members of His body, being of His flesh and of His bones.† In a word, Christ is the Head of the Church, and the Church is His body. In that mystical union we behold, on the one hand, the glorious counterpart and consummation of God's work and way of old, when in the garden of Eden He first formed Eve out of Adam, and then gave her to him for a help-meet. And, on the other hand, we are at the same time taught to recognize in it the sublime idea—the Divine model—of the conjugal relation.

For you will now mark the use Paul makes of both these dispensations, and of other facts belonging to them, in the way of illustrating the nature and obligations of marriage.

The wedded pair he regards as not so much united, as iden-

* Gen. 2 : 21–24.

† Eph. 5 : 30, *μέλη ἐσμὲν τοῦ σώματος αὐτοῦ, ἐκ τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτου καὶ ἐκ τῶν ὀστέων αὐτοῦ.*

tified, in person and life; and to the same effect, you will remember, our Lord himself had argued with the Pharisees;* yet so identified, as that their individual characteristics, while combining to form one symmetrical whole, do still preserve all their original distinctiveness. The head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man. The man is the more immediate and complete image and glory of God, not merely as being endowed, like the woman, with a rational and moral and immortal nature, but as also reflecting and exercising in this lower world the Divine authority and rule: but the woman, in this latter respect especially, is the glory of the man, and shines in his light. The record at once of the creation and of the fall proclaims her dependence and subordination. For there it appears, that Adam was first formed, then Eve: that the man is not of, or from,† the woman; but the woman of the man: that the man was not created for the woman, or on her account;‡ but the woman for the man: that Adam, though over-persuaded by her whom he loved, was not, like her, deceived by the tempter; but the woman being deceived was in the transgression: and, finally, that in the sentence pronounced on the woman there was a solemn ratification, by the voice of the Creator and Judge of both, of her husband's rule over her.

By these various considerations, all of them drawn from the 2d and 3d chapters of Genesis, does the great Apostle confirm his conclusion, that, as the Church is subject unto Christ, so are the wives to be to their own husbands in every thing—in every thing, whereby a good conscience toward God and toward man is not violated. And this decision he was ever most earnest and explicit in declaring to the churches, as one fundamental and essential law of the domestic life. Thus, to the Corinthians he says: 'Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law.' To the Ephesians he writes, 'Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord;' which is as if he had said: This particular duty of that station, which

* Matt. 19 : 3–9. † ἐκ. ‡ διὰ τὴν γυναῖκα.

has been assigned to you by the God of nature, you, as Christian women, are expected to fulfil with a more cheerful alacrity in the knowledge and daily remembrance, that you are thus honoring and serving the Lord Christ. And, with a like regard to this higher aspect of the matter, it is said to the Colossians: 'Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.' Even in what are called the Pastoral Epistles there is a no less frank and peremptory enforcement of this doctrine, as one which the Christian ministry must by no means withhold from the churches. 'Let the woman,' says Paul to Timothy, 'learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.' And so Titus also is required to see that the young women be instructed in the duty of 'obedience to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed,' that is, evil-spoken of, as introducing disorder into families.

If, then, we are willing that the word of God shall decide this question, there can, it is obvious, be no difficulty about it whatever, and, except in so far as the natural instincts of woman, quite as much as of man, must suffer offence, we shall be in little danger of being disturbed by any shrill outcry about what is ignorantly claimed as her emancipation from an unjust and degrading thraldom—to wit, the assertion and vindication of her equal household prerogative with her husband.

But while, as a theory, the unscriptural extravagance might be generally repudiated, I am not at all sure that the Divine order of marriage, on the side now under consideration, is quite as generally honored either in feeling or practice. The incidental infractions of it are thought of rather as incongruities, or whimsical violations of good taste, than as a serious immorality. The tendency also of modern legislation has in several instances been to foster the idea of separate interests where all interests are so peculiarly one—as truly one, as between God and His Christ, or between Christ and His Church. How often even at the family altar is prayer offered, by a miserable barbarism of speech, for 'the united head!'—a monstrosity surely unknown in the economy of the universe. 'The

head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.'

Let us know, that God's way is ever the best. It is simply impossible for any woman, however superior, it may very possibly be, to her husband in intelligence and general character, thus to affect a domestic equality with him, without to the same extent compromising the real dignity and happiness both of herself and of the entire household. Many a mother has wept bitter tears over lawless children, who began by imitating her own example as a wife.

And what inferences, we must finally inquire, does Paul, the unmarried Apostle, draw from his great premises, with regard to the duty of the husband? To this question it will be the best and sufficient answer, merely to recite to you his own magnificent language. It is little to say, that, in the wearisome tirades of the self-styled champions of woman, there is nothing that, in the estimation of any sane mind, will compare with it for chivalrous devotion, and a sublime, persuasive tenderness:

'Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.' In all your intercourse with them, beware of sharpness and severity of speech or demeanor, and think far less of exercising your authority than of showing your love. Even in times of provocation, be not hasty or cruel in your anger. Forget not their comparative frailty, and let your strength be seen in its enabling you to subdue the temptations to a violent acerbity. Let the patience of an unalterable love still have its perfect work, and overcome evil with good.

Such is the tone of the brief address to husbands in the Epistle to the Colossians, (3 : 19.) But the passage, to which I meant to refer you, is the larger and more impassioned one in that to the Ephesians, (5 : 25–33:) 'Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies;' he

does not mean, as much as they love their own bodies, but, as being their own bodies—part of themselves. This is plain from what immediately follows: 'He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church; for'—lest you should suppose that the illustration fails to justify this strong statement of the marriage unity—'we are members of His body, being of His flesh, and of His bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church. Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself'—there again meaning, not, as much as himself, but, as being himself—'part of his soul, his other half.'*

The true measure and model of marital love, therefore, is the self-sacrificing, unchangeable love of the Lord Jesus. That is, indeed, a standard of which every other love must come infinitely short. But none the less certain is it, that, for any one who knows the love of Christ, the exhibition of that love, as the highest example of the very kind of love that he himself owes to his wife, at once lifts the whole subject into a sphere of sanctity and obligation, such as the infidel flatterers of woman never dreamed of. No man, who on the one side glories in his subjection to Christ, and in his absolute and everlasting dependence on Christ's love, can possibly suffer, on the other side, his own limited and temporary authority as a husband to degenerate into a tyranny. And, accordingly, we may boldly ask, Where but in the Church, and in Christian lands, has woman ever risen into her rightful place of security and dignity by the side of man—his most cherished companion, and 'individual solace dear,'* in the pilgrimage of this world, and his fellow-heir of the kingdom of Christ and of God?

The sum of the matter, then, as it regards the reciprocal duties of the husband and the wife, may be given in the

* Milton, *Paradise Lost*, iv. 487, 488.

words of Bishop Taylor: 'The man's authority is love, and the woman's love is obedience;'* or of Archbishop Leighton: 'There all will hold right, where love commands, and love obeys.'

* *The Marriage Ring.*

Lecture XIX.

1 *PETER* 3 : 8–12.

'FINALLY, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing. For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.'

To the special instructions addressed in the previous context to subjects, servants, wives, and husbands, the Apostle nŏw subjoins certain general precepts applicable to all classes alike, and the observance of which was no less essential to the completeness of their Christian character, and to the influential comeliness of their walk among the Gentiles, (ch. 2 : 12.)*

'*Finally*,' or, *But finally* †—not to particularize ‡ further—let me sum up the whole in a few words—'be ye *all of one mind*,' or, be *all like-minded*.§ This is that minding the same thing—the being perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment—which Paul ever enjoins on the churches, and for which he prays on their behalf, as a most precious gift of God.‖ In the present case, and perhaps gen-

* See p. 347, note 1.

† *τὸ δὲ τέλος*.

‡ Œcumenius; *τί χρὴ ἰδιολογεῖσθαι*;

§ *ὁμόφρονες*—in the New Testament only here.

‖ Rom. 12 : 16; 15 : 5; 2 Cor. 13 : 11; Phil. 2 : 2; 3 : 15, (Received Text. In all these places the phrase is *τὸ αὐτὸ—τὸ ἓν—φρονεῖν*;) 1 Cor. 1 : 10; Eph. 4 : 3.

erally, it is not so much agreement in doctrinal views that is intended, as that unanimity of many hearts, which springs from the sense of a common origin, from common relations, and interests, and aims, and hopes. It is such a like-mindedness as you would expect to find among the members of one family, or as when an entire community is stirred and swayed by the same impulses of patriotism. Yea, much rather might this harmony of feeling be looked for among the citizens of the heavenly country—the children of the household of faith. How many, how sacred, how strong, are the bonds that unite them! Discordant as may have been their religious associations in times past, now they can all say: 'To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him.' In like manner, all diversities of outward circumstances disappear before the dignity of their one high calling of God in Christ Jesus, and in the brightness of the one hope of their calling. Rescued from a common ruin, and still beset by the same enemies, they are heirs together of the common salvation. They all eat the same spiritual meat, and all drink the same spiritual drink; and not only while in this world, but throughout eternal ages, the one chief end of their being, and controlling purpose of their hearts, is to glorify God their Redeemer in their bodies and their spirits, which are His.*

It cannot surely be difficult, one would think, for those, of whom all this is true, to dwell together in the unity of brethren, or, as Paul expresses it, to 'keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace,' while 'with one mind and one mouth they glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.'† And yet, alas! we do all know too well that the actual, historical Church has in this as in other respects ever fallen far short of her own ideal. The intrusion within her pale of multitudes of unrenewed men, and the clinging imperfections of her own true children, sufficiently account for the sad discrepancy. Already in the Apostolic age appeared

* 1 Cor. 6 : 20; 8 : 6; 10 : 3, 4; Eph. 4 : 4–6; Jude 3.
† Ps. 133 : 1; Eph. 4 : 3; Rom. 15 : 6.

many ominous symptoms of that spirit of dissension and alienation, which has since run riot in Christendom. And hence the frequency with which in the New Testament it is met by sharp rebuke, and solemn warning, while the duty of a gracious concord is everywhere inculcated on the followers of the Lamb, as essential to their own mutual edification, and to the salutary influence of their profession on the world around. 'Be *all like-minded*'—all cherishing the mind which was also in Christ Jesus.* Ye all call Him Master and Lord. In all He is formed, the hope of glory. To His image it is the holy ambition of all, to be perfectly and for ever assimilated. And even now your highest boast and blessedness is to live under the constraining power of His love, who died for all, as, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, ye all press toward the mark for the heavenly prize. What, brethren, are all the points in which you differ, or can differ, compared with those in which you agree, and must ever agree? See, then, that ye 'be *all like-minded*.' Or, to use again Paul's urgent words: 'Let us, therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.'†

As a natural fruit of this like-mindedness among Christians, it is next expected of them that they '*have compassion one of another*,' or, if we borrow the single expression of the original, that they be *sympathetic*.‡ By this the writer intends more than is conveyed by the phrase in our English version. That is at once understood as referring to a reciprocal sympathy merely in each other's trials and sorrows; whereas the Apostle contemplates a general fellow-feeling with our brethren in whatever concerns them for weal or woe—such a steady, hearty, generous interest in 'the things of others,' as prompts

* Phil. 2 : 5, (*τοῦτο γὰρ φρονείσθω ἐν ὑμῖν ὃ καὶ ἐν* X'. I.)

† John 13 : 13; Gal. 4 : 19; Col. 1 : 27; Rom. 8 : 29; 2 Cor. 5 : 14; Phil. 3 : 13–16, (in this passage *φρονῆιν* is the word employed again and again to express the whole frame and bent of the soul.)

‡ *συμπαθεῖς*—in the New Testament only here.

a man to 'rejoice with them that do rejoice, and to weep with them that weep.' Very beautiful is such a spirit, wherever it is seen; and it sometimes is seen even in those who do not profess to have learned of Christ. All the more to be regretted is it, that, of those who so profess, many fail to exemplify it. They look only on their 'own things.' Lazarus is laid at their gate, hungry and full of sores; or he sits down with them at the table of the Lord. But in either case they strive to be, or to appear, unconscious of his presence. And what further trouble they take in the affairs of others is probably to depreciate their merit and disparage their successes. Surely, in claiming to be living members of the one body whose Head is the Saviour of the world, these persons deceive themselves more than they do any one else. They have at least strangely forgotten, if they ever knew, that first law of the spiritual, as of the natural, organization, 'that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it.'* The oneness of life that pervades the whole should of itself insure this result.

And it is substantially the same duty that is enforced, under a more specific form, when it is added, '*love as brethren.*' Here again Peter uses but one word, as if we should say, *philadelphians or brother-loving;*† thus appealing once more (ch. 1 : 22; 2 : 17) to one of the deepest instincts of the new creature—that by which the children of God recognize in each other a heavenly kindred. There is, indeed, the brotherhood of a common humanity, and on the strength of that we are bound to love all men, even our enemies. But the brotherly love of Christians to one another is a tenderer and more domestic affection, as of those who dwell together in the constant and intimate and more confidential charities of home. In one place, accordingly, it is said, 'Let love be without dissimulation;' and then it presently follows, 'Be

* Rom. 12 : 15; Phil. 2 : 4; Luke 16 : 20; 1 Cor. 12 : 25, 26.

† φιλάδελφοι—in the New Testament only here.

kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love;'* that being something 'as distinct,' says Dr. Chalmers on that text, 'from general love or charity in the moral, as the magnetic attraction is from the general attraction of gravity in the material, world.'

'Be *pitiful*,' adds Peter, or *tender-hearted*, as the same word† is rendered in the only other place where it occurs in the New Testament, (Eph. 4 : 32.) And in both places it expresses the feeling that becomes Christians in the presence of suffering, whether of their fellow-men, or of fellow-Christians. In the latter case, not only were there strong additional motives for the indulgence and manifestation of this feeling; there was also in the perilous and trying condition of the Church in that age more frequent occasion for it. Of all religions, however, Christianity is the religion of love, and love 'is kind'‡—kind especially to those in distress, whatever in other respects be their circumstances or their character. 'Put on, therefore,' says Paul to the Colossians, (3 : 12,) 'as the elect of God'—as a dress or ornament peculiarly befitting your calling and profession—'bowels of mercy, kindness;'§ and the innumerable institutions for the relief of every description of human woe, that cover the face of Christendom, are now, and have been for ages, but one form of her reply to that appeal.

The next injunction, 'be *courteous*'—according to our English version—would seem to refer immediately to the outward social manners, as the expression, no doubt, of the inward disposition; whereas the word so rendered, and which in the New Testament does not occur elsewhere, points primarily to the inward disposition itself. It really means *kindly-minded, benevolent;*‖ and this again, in connection with the rest of the verse, might be regarded as tautological. But the objection is obviated by a change of reading, which, as being amply sustained by the manuscripts, has long been adopted by all

* Rom. 12 : 9, 10. † εὔσπλαγχνος. ‡ 1 Cor. 13 : 4.

§ σπλάγχνα οἰκτιρμοῦ, (the reading now generally received.)

‖ φιλόφρονες. The above remark applies equally to the adverbial form in Acts 28 : 7.

the critical editors.* This would be represented by *humble-minded;* and then the whole verse might stand thus, '*But finally,* be *all like-minded, sympathizing, brotherly, tender-hearted, humble-minded;*' a combination and order of graces, which still keep us in mind of a passage already adverted to: 'Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind.'† Nor is the arrangement altogether an arbitrary one. As nothing more unfits a man for any kindly consideration of others than an overweening estimate of himself, so the lowliness of heart which is produced by genuine repentance, and the experience of God's saving mercy in Christ, though it has never been allowed a place on the scale of natural ethics, is not only itself of great price in the sight of God, but by far the best soil for the culture of the social virtues. More effectually than any, even the highest, degree of proficiency in the arts of civilized life, it softens and subdues a selfish and arrogant rudeness, whether of temper or of manner, and makes a man gentle and tender, forbearing and compassionate, in his intercourse with his fellows. In this regard alone, therefore, there is reason enough why, in the school of evangelical morality, so prominent a rank is ever assigned to humility. It is the very clasp, so to speak, that binds on the new creature the lovely, encompassing zone of all Christian graces. The mention of it here, as something incumbent alike on every individual in the communion of the church, accords well with the spirit of the preceding addresses to different classes of the faithful, and forms also, you will observe, a suitable link of transition to what immediately follows.‡

'*Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing.*' The slaves, you remember, had already been reminded of the example which Christ Himself had set them of such a patient endurance of wrong, (ch. 2 : 23.) But the lesson was one for all Christians, at a time when violence and calumny were the lot of all. These they were, equally with the slaves, forbidden

* ταπεινόφρονες, (Sin. A, B, C, etc. Not found elsewhere in the New Testament.)

† Col. 3 : 12. ‡ Comp. on ch. 5 : 5.

to repay in kind. And this not so much from motives of an ordinary prudence, lest a vindictive retaliation should only provoke severer treatment; but because of its essential incompatibility with the Christian calling and destiny. Mark the beautiful retribution now recommended to his brethren by him, who formerly 'stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high-priest, and smote off his ear,' besides answering the taunts of the bystanders with cursing:* '*but contrariwise*'—*on the contrary*,† in directest opposition to these impulses of the flesh—'*blessing*'—invoking, that is, God's blessing on your persecutors and revilers, that their sin may be forgiven, their hearts changed, and they themselves made partakers of all that is most dear to you. As if he had said: By nothing short of this noblest style of revenge can you fulfil the precept, or fully imitate the example, of the Master. And in case that example were thought too lofty for imitation, Peter might have added: 'Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.' What Paul testified of himself and the Apostles generally was true, we have no reason to doubt, of the writer of this epistle: 'Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed, we entreat.'‡

But let us rather attend to the particular consideration by which this distinctive rule of the Christian life is here actually enforced. '*Knowing that*'—or simply, as some read, *because* §—'*unto this ye were called*' ‖—at the time when ye heard and obeyed the voice of God in the Gospel of His Son—'*that ye should inherit blessing*'**—only blessing—effectual, permanent blessing—the unmingled fulness of the blessing of grace.

And how, it may be asked, does this bear on the point in hand—the duty, namely, of returning good for evil, blessing for cursing? This question has been answered in two ways.

* Matt. 26 : 51, 74. † τοὐναντίον.

‡ 1 Cor. 4 : 12, 13; 11 : 1.

§ Wells, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Theile, Alford, cancel εἰδότες, (according to Sin. A, B, C, J, and ancient versions.)

‖ As in ch. 2 : 21. See p. 173, note*.

** Comp. the common version of Heb. 6 : 7; James 3 10, etc.

Some* would explain the matter thus: '*To this were ye called*'—to the work of blessing others, even such as hate and abuse you; precisely this was your appointed task—'*in order that*,' as the issue and reward of such a course of conduct, '*ye might inherit blessing*.' Your own future happiness, therefore, as God's sons and heirs, depends on your compliance with this injunction.

The other explanation is to this effect: '*To this were ye called*'—the very design and end of your calling was this, namely, '*that ye might inherit blessing*.' By nature ye were enemies and 'children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved you, even when ye were dead in sins,' called you, 'not to wrath,' but to blessing—blessing here, and especially blessing hereafter. And will *you* now deal in wrath with *your* enemies? Nay, let the grace which you have so largely and freely received overflow freely to them. Blessing them, you will show yourselves the children of blessing—'the children of your Father which is in heaven: for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.'† This I believe to be the more common understanding of the connection, and I think also that it yields a finer and more generous sense.‡

The general exhortations that we have now considered of the 8th and 9th verses are confirmed in the three verses that follow by a quotation from the 34th Psalm—(vs. 12–16)—taken, as is common with our Apostle, with slight variations, and without any formality of reference, from the version of the Seventy.

Of these variations the most important occurs in the 10th verse, which, as it appears in the Hebrew, might be rendered thus, 'Who *is* the man that desireth life, loving days to see good?' and, as given in that Greek translation with which the

* Calvin, De Wette, Brückner, and others.

† Eph. 2 : 3–5; 1 Thess. 5 : 9; Matt. 5 : 45; 10 : 8.

‡ Leighton would combine the two methods, and make *εἰς τοῦτο (unto this)* refer both backward to the duty and forward to the inheritance. But this is scarcely practicable.

New Testament writers seem to have been quite as familiar, thus: 'Who is the man that desireth life, loving to see good days?' Now there has been a great deal of superfluous ingenuity expended on attempts to make the phraseology of the first clause before us, '*he that will love life*,' strictly equivalent to the simple, *he that desireth life*, of the original; whereas the rather peculiar expression that Peter employs seems really to have been framed for the very purpose of conveying an idea somewhat more emphatic: '*he that will love life*'—desires to do so—is in earnest in his wish and purpose and endeavor to do so—of course, from finding life a season of prosperity and enjoyment;* instead of hating it, as so many almost come to do, for its vexations.† That this, indeed, is the way, in which the wish to love life is to be gratified, is at once explained by the next clause, which itself needs no explanation: '*and see good days*.' And then comes what we may call the Divine directory for the attainment of that at which all men are, however blindly, aiming, to wit, a happy life. This is summed up in four particulars.

First, '*let him refrain*'—*make to cease, restrain*‡—'*his tongue from evil, and his lips from speaking guile;*' § from evil of every kind, whether in the way of profane, or slanderous,

* There is not the least occasion, therefore, for fancying a corruption of the text, (Piscator, Grotius, Semler, Carpzov, and others;) or for changing the construction into *long after life and loveth to see*, (Syriac, the older English versions, and others,) or into *wishes and loves*, (Estius and others;) or for making θέλων ζωὴν ἀγαπᾷν a pleonasm for θέλων ζωήν, (Luther, Pott,) or ἀγαπῶν ζωήν, (Pott's other suggestion;) or for regarding the participle, (Estius, '*Qui diligendo diligit, id est, vehementer diligit,*') or the infinitive, (Augusti, Grashof, Stier,=*would fain live long,*) as merely adverbial or intensive; or for explaining ἀγαπᾷν as=*to enjoy*, (Guyse, Macknight, Bloomfield, Brown, and others,) or *to show love*, (De Wette;) etc.

† Gen. 27 : 46; Job 3 : 1, etc.; Eccl. 2 : 17.

‡ παυσάτω.

§ The words, ἀπό κακοῦ, καὶ χείλη. τοῦ μὴ λαλῆσαι δόλον, are taken from the Sept. Ps. 34 : 13, where the original Hebrew repeats the preposition before the infinitive. And as, moreover, the common classical construction of παύω with a simple genitive of the thing *from which* (comp. Luke 4 : 42, etc.) is employed elsewhere by our Apostle, (ch. 4 : 1; comp. 2 Pet. 2 : 14,) it need not be shunned here. Nor is the pleonastic μή at all an objection, (see Winer, p. 532.) The old English and other versions adopt the form of the Syriac and Vulgate: *et labia ejus ne loquantur dolum*.—Lachmann and Tischendorf cancel each αὐτοῦ, (after A, B, C. —Sin. omits only the second.)

or impure, or merely idle and unprofitable discourse; and, in particular, from all untruthfulness of speech, 'a lying tongue' being one of the things that are especially hateful to the God of truth.* If you have never purposely examined the matter, you would perhaps be surprised to find how frequent and full and vehement Scripture is in its denunciation of the sins of the tongue. 'Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh,'† that being the outlet by which the teeming soul of man most readily utters itself according to its kind. And hence, in that terrible description in the Epistle of James, (3 : 2–10,) the untamed tongue is spoken of as 'a world of iniquity'—the exact image and reflection of the inner world of 'all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.'‡ And hence too the inspired writer in the same place pronounces him who 'offends not in word' to be 'a perfect man'—a perfection, which, in its absolute sense, has been found only in that Man, into whose lips grace was poured.§ But of all Christians Christ is the great Exemplar.

Secondly, '*let him eschew evil*'—evil in practice, as well as in word. So far from indulging therein himself, or taking pleasure in them that do, let him cherish the quick resentment of a holy aversion to whatever is condemned by the law of purity and love. If it comes in his way, and he is compelled to look at it, let it be only that he may 'avoid it, pass not by it, *turn from* it, and pass away.'‖

Nor, in the third place, will it suffice that his righteousness be altogether of this negative sort. Scriptural morality, whether of the Old Testament or of the New, far exceeds that of the fearful and jealous anchorite, fleeing from intercourse with his fellow-men, in the vain hope of thereby escaping beyond the reach of temptation, and the presence of sin. The avoidance of evil must be accompanied by positive well-doing. It is therefore here added, '*and do good*'—whatever is well-pleasing in the sight of God, and 'profitable unto men,'** even those most hostile to us. An active benefi-

* Prov. 6 : 16, 17. † Matt. 12 : 34. ‡ Rom. 1 : 18. § Psalm 45 : 2.
‖ Prov. 4 : 15; Rom. 1 : 32. Peter's word is ἐκκλινάτω, to which Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford, add δέ.
** Tit. 3 : 8.

cence is the necessary complement of a genuine reformation. 'Cease to do evil; learn to do well'—God's command to Israel of old by the prophets—is but repeated with a more persuasive earnestness by Christ's Apostles: 'Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.'*

And finally, in order to the yet surer attainment of the blessing proposed, let there be, in addition to, and pervading, this harmless and blameless life—this uprightness and kindliness of word and deed—a distinct and settled purpose, 'if it be possible, as much as lieth in you, to live peaceably with all men.'† One of the saddest features, certainly, of the present condition of human nature and of human society, is the constant tendency to discord and war. This tendency the man, who would make good his claims to sonship in the family of God,‡ must do his best in every lawful way to resist and overcome. '*Let him seek peace, and ensue*'—that is, *pursue*§—'*it*.' In the words used by another‖ in illustration of the original passage in the Psalm, (34 : 14:) '*Seek peace*, not in an indolent and listless manner, but *pursue it*, chase it, hunt for it, and eagerly endeavor to attain it. The command implies that the object is both worthy of pursuit and liable to be lost.'

Such, then, is the spirit, and such the manner of life, to which was promised, in accordance with the genius of the ancient dispensation, length of prosperous and happy days.** And still the promise stands sure, even for this world, as far as it shall serve for God's glory and His children's good. Now, as much as formerly, 'godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.'†† The main difference is that, by reason of the enlargement and clearness of the Gospel revelation, 'bringing life and immortality to light,' the interest of the present time has faded into comparative dimness before 'the

* Is. 1 : 16, 17; Rom. 12 : 9. † Rom. 12 : 18. ‡ Matt. 5 : 9.
§ διωξάτω. Comp. Heb. 12 : 14. ‖ Dr. J. A. Alexander.
** Isaac Taylor, *The Spirit of the Hebrew Poetry*, ch. iii.: 'The bright idea of *earthly well-being* pervades the Old Testament Scriptures, and this worldly sunshine is their distinction, as compared with the New Testament.'
†† 1 Tim. 6 : 8.

glory that excelleth.'* In all dispensations alike it remains ever true, that God 'will withhold no good thing'—nothing really, permanently good—'from them that walk uprightly.'† And you will observe that here too the gracious promise, as cited by our Apostle, carries with it the same infallible guarantee.

'*For the* ‡ *eyes of the Lord* are *over*'—or *upon*,§ turned *upon*—'*the righteous, and His ears unto their prayer.*'‖ What a picture of condescending majesty and love! Behold, He who inhabiteth eternity, and spreadeth out the heavens as a tent to dwell in,** with unswerving and most loving regards watches over the humblest saint—follows him in every step of his pilgrimage—marks every good purpose and aspiration of his heart, as well as all his outward perils and temptations and sorrows and tears. 'The eyes of the Lord his God are always upon him, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year.' Yea, 'the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him.'†† And as they are ever within sight, so also within hearing. '*His ears* are *unto their prayer.*' He waits to hear—bows down His ear to listen—and no cry of their distress, no ejaculation of filial faith and hope, no inward sigh even of the bruised and weary and longing soul, fails to find entrance there. Oh! the blessedness of those for whom the Almighty and omnipresent God thus cares. 'I am poor and needy,' said one of them of old; 'yet the Lord thinketh upon me.'‡‡ Of that he was no less assured, and it sufficed for his consolation.

Or, if aught else were required to deepen the sense of this

* 2 Tim. 1 : 10; 2 Cor. 3 : 10. † Ps. 84 : 11.

‡ The article *οἱ* is cancelled by Bengel, Scholz, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford, (after Sin. A, B, C[1].)

§ *ἐπί* with the accusative. So the Septuagint for the אֶל of Ps. 34 : 15, where our common version has *upon.*

εἰς δέησιν αὐτῶν. εἰς, like the original אֶל, marks direction.—Wherever else *δέησις* occurs in the singular, the English version renders it as above. Here it follows the older English versions, and they the Vulgate *preces.*

** Is. 40 : 22; 57 : 15. †† Deut. 11 : 12; 2 Chron. 16 : 9.

‡‡ Ps. 40 : 17.

great security, it is supplied by the thought that the enemies of the righteous are equally within the scope of the Divine glance: '*but the face of the Lord* is *against*'—or, as in the margin, *upon*—turned *upon*—'*those who do evil things*;'* and, as usual, the marginal rendering is the more exact. At least, the word and the construction are precisely the same as in the first clause, and there is no necessity for changing the interpretation.† On the contrary, there is something truly awful in the bare simplicity of the general announcement that, while God sees the righteous and listens to their prayer, He is at the same time looking also at the evil-doers. They may think to hide themselves and their wicked courses and counsels in darkness or the shadow of death.‡ But even there God, though unseen, confronts them still, gazing direct and full on all their ways, and their most secret and as yet unuttered devices. They would fain turn their backs on God; but God's face is toward them; and what more is needed to insure their ultimate destruction, and meanwhile to guard the righteous from their assaults? That is truly an awful word from the mouth of God: 'I will set mine eyes upon them for evil, and not for good.' §

You also perceive how powerful an encouragement is furnished by this consideration to such a quiet, inoffensive, forgiving, beneficent life, and that under the most adverse cir-

* ἐπὶ ποιοῦντας κακά.

† The original בְּ of Ps. 34 : 16 is thus explained by Alexander: '*The face of the Lord is with evil-doers*, that is, visible or present to them, no less than to good men.' Very many take πρόσωπον (Sept. for פָּנִים) as of itself implying *displeasure, anger*. In Ps. 21 : 9 and Lam. 4 : 16, our version so renders פָּנִים, and even De Wette has *Zornblick* in the latter instance. But all this is quite arbitrary. Everywhere this accessory idea is suggested solely by the connection. And therefore Huther is not quite correct in saying that, on account of the very frequent use of πρόσωπον in the Old Testament in reference to punishment, Peter might so employ it here without specification; in other words, as being itself antithetical. The opposition (δέ) is to be found neither in ἐπί nor in πρόσωπον, nor in both combined, and certainly not in the final clause of Ps. 34 : 16 (here omitted, Grotius and Pott suggest, for brevity's sake; Jachmann, as something already well known; De Wette, as being probably too harsh [*zu hart*] for the Apostle!) but in what we instantly associate with the whole statement.

‡ Job 34 : 22. § Amos 9 : 4.

cumstances, as the writer has been inculcating upon his afflicted brethren. The practical inference he would draw from God's relation to them that work iniquity is the same as Paul's: 'Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine: I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.'*

* Rom. 12: 19–21.

Lecture XX.

1 *Peter* 3 : 13–17.

'And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil-doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ. For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well-doing, than for evil-doing.'

The writer had been laying down rules for the guidance of his brethren in some of their most important relations, civil and social, and had followed these with a general exhortation addressed to all alike. Then, in the verses just preceding our text, to prove that a good life—a life in accordance with the foregoing precepts—must needs be a prosperous and happy one, he appeals, in the language of the Psalmist, to the great truth of the Divine inspection of the character and ways of men. So long as 'the righteous Lord loveth righteousness,' it cannot but be that in a world created and upheld by His power, pervaded by His presence, and controlled in all its affairs and tendencies by His sovereign, presiding will, it shall be well with the righteous.* On this one ground of confidence the children of God could well afford to rest their cause.

But now the 13th verse seems to add to this another, though a secondary, consideration: '*And who* is *he that will*

* Ps. 11 : 7; Is. 3 : 10.

harm you, if ye be followers' *—*imitators*, or, as some read, *zealous—'of that which is good?'* This, it is true, may be, and often is, taken for a simple inference from what goes before, carrying out into expression what was already there, implied, thus: 'The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good. If, then, you are approved of Him, the impartial, almighty Judge of all, who can do you any real harm? or, who will even dare attempt it?' In other words, 'if God be for us, who can be against us?' The connection would then be much the same as in the passage of Isaiah from which, as given in the Septuagint, the phrase before us seems to have been borrowed: 'Behold, the Lord God will help me. Who is he that shall condemn me?' Or as in Paul's similar challenge: 'It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth?' † that is, can or dare condemn?

The present case, however, is commonly understood somewhat differently, or as introducing an additional thought drawn from ordinary experience, and a reasonable, human probability; as if it were said: And besides this highest security that the righteous have, in the fact that 'the Lord looketh from heaven; He beholdeth all the sons of men,' who is going to hurt you—who so perverse as even to wish to *do evil* to you—if you, on your part, are known and distinguished as good men, doing good to all, as you have opportunity? Who is there even of worldly men that has wholly lost the sense of right and wrong, or of the comeliness of virtue, or of gratitude and a natural equity? As the Lord said, Sinners also love those that love them, and do good to those who do good to them.‡ By following, therefore, the course prescribed for you, you may count on having on your side every possible advantage, both from God and man.

* *μιμηταί*—which is commonly followed by a personal genitive. And so here some (Guyse, Doddridge, Macknight, Scott, Scholefield, Brown, Peile, etc.) take *τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ* as masculine: *of Him who is good.* But the antithesis to *ποιοῦντας κακά . . . κακώσων* is in favor of the neuter interpretation; and though Heb. 13 : 7 and 3 John 11 seem to show that *μιμηταί* is not incompatible with that, yet the better reading probably is *ζηλωταί* (comp. Tit. 2 : 14) adopted by Wells, Lachmann, Alford, after Sin. A, B, C, the Syriac version, etc.

† Prov. 15 : 3; Rom. 8 : 31, 33, 34; Is. 50 : 9, (*τίς κακώσει με;*)

‡ Ps. 33 : 13; Gal. 6 : 10; Luke 6 : 32, 33.

To this view, perhaps, it is not a sufficient objection, that the Epistle everywhere assumes that the Christians were then actually beset with enemies from whom they had already suffered many things, and were yet to suffer more and worse.* With this fully in mind, the Apostle might still suggest in a passing way what may commonly, and in the long run, be anticipated as the fruit of a consistent Christian life, just as in writing to the Romans, and under the reign of Nero, Paul did not hesitate to say: 'Rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: for he is the minister of God to thee for good.'† Not only is that the Divine intention in the ordinance of civil government; it is also, on the whole, and with whatever exceptions and interruptions, the result of its operation. Now, on the same principle of interpretation it may be asserted, and in equally general terms, that, bad as the world is, an exemplary and harmonious manifestation of the evangelical virtues tends to conciliate the respect and good will of men; nay, that, 'when a man's ways please the Lord, He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.'‡ Nor must we forget that the sufferings of even good men, and in a good cause, are often traceable, not to their goodness, but to the imperfections of their spirit and deportment. It may easily have been so to some extent with those to whom Peter wrote,§ and his language was fitted to lead them to examine themselves, and put them on their guard.

All this while, however, the writer was well aware that those who, in that evil time, devoted themselves to the service of the living and true God, and of Jesus Christ whom He had sent, became thereby exposed to misconception, hatred, and violence, from the world and its rulers. He goes on, therefore, to put the case at the worst, and so resumes his appropriate

* See ch. 1 : 6; 2 : 12, 21–23; 4 : 12, etc.

† Rom. 13 : 3, 4. ‡ Prov. 16 : 7.

§ As much is implied, Wiesinger thinks, in the use of γένησθε: '*if, in consequence of my exhortation, ye become*,' etc.

and now pressing work of comforting and 'strengthening his brethren'* amidst their trials and perils.

'*But if even*'—and this, it must be confessed, is only too supposable—'*even if ye should suffer*† *for righteousness' sake*'—without your having given any just cause of offence to any, or even on account of whatever in you is most pleasing to God, as, for example, the name that you bear, and the holy life by which you seek to illustrate it—still I can take nothing back of all that I have been saying of the privileges of the righteous. Nay, ye are then in a special sense '*blessed*'—heirs of that double blessing which, as I well remember, our Lord's own lips pronounced on His innocent martyrs.‡ In your very innocence itself ye are blessed—blessed in the favor of God, and the sympathies of Jesus, and the presence and power of the Spirit of all consolation—blessed in the immediate fruits of your heroic faith and patience to the Church and to the world—and finally, and for ever, blessed in the exceeding great reward that awaits those of Christ's followers who for His sake 'endure hardness.'§

But that they might not fail of the full measure of this blessedness, it was, of course, needful that they should rise above the fear of man—that snare which had formerly once and again involved the writer himself in bitter remorse and shame. He is therefore careful here to add, availing himself, as usual, of Old Testament phraseology, '*But be not afraid of their terror*'—or according to the form of the original, *fear not their fear*‖—'*neither be troubled; but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts.*'

* Luke 22 : 32.

† See p. 186, note §. Here the barbarous '*But and if*' is from the Rhenish version, after the Vulgate *sed et si*. Nowhere else in the New Testament is εἰ καί followed by the optative. Once (Phil. 3 : 12) it takes the subjunctive; elsewhere the indicative, and is then frequently and correctly rendered in our version by *though*. The optative gently presents the case, not as an actual, but as a possible one.

‡ Matt. 5 : 10–12. The common version translates μακάριος, *blessed*, 44 times out of 50.—After μακάριοι, Sin. inserts ἐστέ.

§ 2 Tim. 2 : 3.

‖ τὸν δὲ φόβον αὐτῶν μὴ φοβηθῆτε. Some (as Whitby, Benson, Carpzov, Macknight, Brown, etc.) have given this δέ an illative force—*therefore, then*—which nowhere belongs to it.

As the words were first used by the Prophet, (Is. 8 : 12,) they were a warning to the faithful against allowing themselves to be disturbed by the vain alarms that agitated their unbelieving neighbors ; and they have sometimes been taken in the same sense in the passage before us : *Fear not what they fear*, from whom you may have to suffer ; or, *Fear not as they fear*. But here it is more natural to understand them as simply equivalent to, *Fear not them ;* or else thus : *Fear not the fearful things they may threaten or inflict ;** another lesson which our Apostle had studied also at the feet of Jesus : 'And I say unto you, my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear : Fear Him, which after He hath killed hath power to cast into hell ; yea, I say unto you, Fear Him.'† All this is implied when Peter, cutting short and slightly modifying his quotations from Isaiah, merely adds, '*but sanctify the Lord God*'—or, as we should probably read, *the Lord Christ*‡—'*in your hearts*.' The Lord having pledged Himself to stand by you as your Protector and Deliverer, for you now to cower and tremble in the presence of your enemies is to doubt His faithfulness or His power, and to profane, so to speak, His holy name. On the other hand, cherish in your innermost souls an earnest, abiding sense of, and an unwavering reliance on, His presence and love, and, as you will thus honor Him inwardly, so, living or dying, you will glorify Him before men by your calm bearing and immovable fortitude under all outward assaults. Like Moses of old, and like Stephen now, you will 'endure as seeing Him who is invisible.'§ Says Archbishop Leighton : 'In all states, I know of no heart's ease, but to believe ; to sanctify and honor thy God in resting on His word.'

Here too, however, a caution was needed on the other side,

* These variations are evolved according as *φόβον* and *αὐτῶν*—one or the other, or both—are explained objectively or subjectively.

† Luke 12 : 4, 5.

‡ So Wells, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Theile, Tregelles, Alford, after Sin. A, B, C, and the ancient versions.

§ Heb. 11 : 27.

to guard against an injurious use of these exhortations. What is enjoined is a spirit of fearlessness in regard to the persecutors of Christ and His people, and, in order to that, of a supreme, inward reverence toward God. Now, with some this might be so far mistaken as to be employed to justify or palliate a show of disrespect and defiance toward the adversaries of the truth, or at least a feeling of indifference to their better instruction. It is therefore added: '*Yet** be *ready always for an answer to every one that asketh of you an account of† the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.*'

Observe, they are not required to be always disputing about their hope, or obtruding it upon others, without regard to the proprieties of time, place, and person, but to '*be ready*'—ready in their own clear apprehension of the subject, and ready also in a loving concern for the guidance and salvation of others; 'ready *always*,' on the humblest occasions, as well as the more public and formal; ready in the house, and by the wayside, and amidst the ordinary businesses of life, no less than when brought before the kings and judges of the earth; 'ready always *for an answer*,' *apology*, vindication, defence, as when Paul spoke for himself on the temple-stairs and before Agrippa's throne;‡ but, so far from waiting for rare opportunities of that sort, 'be ready always for an answer *to every one*,' rich or poor, learned or unlearned, 'Greek or Jew, Barbarian, Scythian, bond or free;'§ what you have to say is of equal moment to one as to another, and they have all an equal claim on your benevolence; 'to every one,' therefore, '*that asketh of you*,' and so manifests a degree of interest, greater or less, and howsoever awakened, in the topic so dear to yourselves; 'that asketh of you,' not merely '*a reason of*,'

* δέ—which Lachmann cancels on the authority of Sin. C, the Vulgate, and Origen—(his comma after ὑμῶν suggesting also the dependence of ἕτοιμοι on the subject of ἁγιάσατε.) Most treat it as a mere connective, or particle of transition, while some would here begin a new paragraph, and occasionally drop the δέ altogether in translation. Bengel's view is peculiar: 'There is force in the δέ. Not only should your *walk* be comely, (ch. 2 : 12,) *but* every one ready also with his *confession*.'

† ἕτοιμοι δὲ ἀεὶ πρὸς ἀπολογίαν παντὶ τῷ αἰτοῦντι ὑμᾶς λόγον περὶ κτλ.

‡ Acts 22 : 1; 26 : 1, 2. Comp. Phil. 1 : 7, 17. In all these cases the word is ἀπολογία or its verb.

§ Col. 3 : 11.

but, in general, *an account of, a statement concerning,** '*the hope that is in you*,' its nature, ground, object, and influences. Tell him how you too, like your heathen neighbors, were lately living without hope in the world—with no hope toward God—no hope for a dying hour—no hope for eternity. Then speak to him of 'God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, our hope.'† Open to him the glorious mystery of His person, and work, and death, and resurrection, and ascension to the Father's right hand, and future return as the Judge of the quick and dead, and King of all the earth. Explain to him, moreover, your own personal interest in all this through your living union by faith with this blessed Son of God, the world's Redeemer, and the consequent indwelling and gracious witness of His Spirit with your spirit, that you also are now 'children of God; and if children, then heirs; heirs, indeed, of God, but'—that only because you are—'joint-heirs with Christ.'‡ Oh! what must be the value of the inheritance which has been bequeathed by the Almighty Father to the Son of His love! How 'sure and steadfast' the hope of participation therein, which is secured by such guarantees! How powerful to console amid all present privations, and to raise and strengthen, dignify and purify, the heart in which it dwells, and the life which it enlightens and adorns! This hope it is, you can say, that enables you to bear without passion or murmuring the world's wrong and contumely, and which, like that Divine Form in the seven times heated furnace of Babylon, still shines, victorious in its brightness, through the fires of martyrdom. Finally, with this '*account of the hope that is in you*,' you may go on, for the sake of the inquirer, to contrast it in all these respects with such hopes as he himself entertains—so limited in their scope, so insecure in their foundation, so uncertain of fulfilment, so inoperative for good on his moral and spiritual being and his eternal destiny.

* Comp. Luke 16 : 2; Acts 19 : 40; Rom. 14 : 12, etc. The *περί* also of itself excludes the ordinary limitation.

† Eph. 2 12; 1 Tim. 1 : 1.

‡ Rom. 8 : 16, 17, (*κληρονόμοι μὲν Θεοῦ, συγκληρονόμοι δὲ Χ.*)

'*But*,'* adds Peter, see to it that, while you thus unfold the infinite superiority of your standing and privileges, your confident earnestness do not degenerate into a tone of arrogant ostentation. Let your whole discourse be '*with meekness and fear;*' with '*meekness*,' such as, in dealing with a poor sinner who is still out of the way of life, becomes those who are themselves indebted for whatever they have and hope for to the free grace of God; and with '*fear*,' or reverential awe, lest, while testifying for Christ, and as in His presence, you prejudice, by the matter or manner of your address on a subject of transcendent, vital interest, a soul for which He died.†

And since no confession of the mouth, however in itself unexceptionable and persuasive, has any value in the sight of God, or is likely to carry weight with men, unless it be accompanied and sustained by a consistent life, the Apostle in conclusion again reminds his brethren of that indispensable requisite. '*Having a good conscience*'—'a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men,' such as Paul ever carefully labored to maintain.‡ Without this, your sufferings lose their one element of glory and power as Christian sufferings—sufferings of Christ, and for Christ. Without it, you quit the shelter of the Divine promise, and can no longer feel or manifest the lion boldness of the righteous, but must stand abashed before your foes. Without it, you cannot sanctify the Lord in your hearts,§ or hallow His name in the world;

* Before *μετά*, Wells, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford, insert *ἀλλά*,=*but with*, etc., (Sin A, B, C, Vulgate, etc.)

† The common English version, as frequently printed, closes the 15th verse with a full period, though the original edition had a colon, which is preferable, and most other versions, as well as many editions of the Greek text, have but a comma. Wakefield even construes the words *μετὰ πραΰτητος καὶ φόβου (with meekness and fear)* with *ἔχοντες (having)* of v. 16; to which verse they are transferred also in the common editions of the Syriac and Vulgate, etc. But it is much better to consider them, according to the ordinary arrangement, as defining the spirit and manner of a right, Christian confession; to which the next verse then adds, in close connection, the simultaneous and indispensable corroboration of the life.

‡ Acts 24 : 16.

§ *ἔχοντες (having)* is to be construed as depending on *ἁγιασάτε, (sanctify,)* not immediately, (so Steiger and De Wette,) but in subordination to *ἕτοιμοι, (ready.* So Wiesinger.)

nor can you hope to silence your accusers, and bring them to a better mind.

This last consideration, you may remember, was distinctly adverted to at the very beginning of the section, in which the writer undertook to set forth what belongs to a comely deportment among the Gentiles, (ch. 2 : 12,) and now here, at the close, it is resumed, and pressed once more. '*Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you*'—or, as we had it formerly, '*that, wherein they may speak against you as evil-doers, they may be ashamed who traduce your good behavior in Christ.*'* Which is as much as to say: 'Only let your conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ.' 'As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him'—in union and communion with Him; and, though you may still be smitten with the tongue of slander, and your very good itself be evil spoken of,† yet it can scarcely be that your calumniators will always hold out against the silent but constant appeal of a patient, humble, loving, holy life. And then will come for them a time of shame, when convicted at last before the community, and by their own conscience, of their previous ignorant malice. Nay, who can tell but that, in the revulsion of feeling, they may themselves then pass under the yoke of Christ, 'and falling down on their faces, worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth'?‡

The exhortation is confirmed, and the whole case, as regards suffering for righteousness' sake, summed up in the 17th verse: '*For*'—whatever becomes of your persecutors and maligners—'it is *better*'—infinitely and in every way better;§ better for you; better for all around you; better for the cause of Christ, and for the glory of God—'it is *better, that ye suffer, if the will of God should so will*'—for what is safer for

* *ἵνα ἐν ᾧ* (see p. 133, note §) *καταλαλῶσιν* (a contingent probability. Bengel and Lachmann read, as in ch. 2 : 12, *καταλαλοῦσιν* [Sin. A, C;] Tischendorf and Alford, *καταλαλεῖσθε* [B]) *ὑμῶν ὡς κακοποιῶν*, (these words are cancelled by Tischendorf and Alford. The Vulgate has simply *ὑμῶν*, of which Mill approves, thinking that *ὡς κακοποιῶν* came in as commentary from ch. 2 : 12,) *καταισχυνθῶσιν οἱ ἐπηρεάζοντες ὑμῶν τὴν ἀγαθὴν ἐν Χριστῷ* [Sin., *εἰς Χριστὸν*] *ἀναστροφήν*.

† Phil 1 : 27; Col. 2 : 6; Rom. 14 : 16. ‡ 1 Cor. 14 : 25.

§ Bengel: 'beatius, infinitis modis.'

you than the will of God, come in what shape it may? And yet I grant that, though you are to accept the cross, when it comes, you are not to seek for it.* Only of this be sure, that whenever for His own wise and gracious purposes God is pleased to bring you into trial, it is better that ye suffer—'in *doing well than* in *doing evil*.' † The sufferers themselves might be apt to think otherwise. They might be tempted to consider it an aggravation of their distress, that they suffered in innocence, or even for what was really praiseworthy. No, says Peter; that is a most blessed alleviation of your trials. Let it be your consolation and joy. Not only do you thus enter into the fellowship of all the prophets and righteous men of old, in whom the Divine truth and holiness were in like manner persecuted, but you become conformed to the great example of the Lord Himself.

In the verses that follow, that great example is displayed anew.

* So Luther: 'Gehe du hin in Glaube und Liebe: kommt das Kreuz, so nimm es an; kommt es nicht, so such' es nicht.'

† *κρεῖττον γὰρ ἀγαθοποιοῦντας, εἰ θέλοι* (Sin., etc. So all the recent editors, instead of *θέλει*.C omp. the optative in v. 14—p. 222, note †) *τὸ θέλημα τοῦ Θεοῦ, πάσχειν, ἢ κακοποιοῦντας.* Leighton: 'This is by far the better, to suffer *in well-doing*, and *for* it, than to suffer either *for doing evil*, or simply to suffer *in that way*, (as the words run,) *κακοποιοῦντας πάσχειν to suffer doing evil*.'

Lecture XXI.

1 *Peter* 3 : 18.

'For Christ . . . . to God.

In one place (2 Pet. 3 : 16) our Apostle speaks of 'things hard to be understood' in the writings of Paul. But here, at the end of this third chapter of his own First Epistle, we come on a passage of exceeding difficulty—one that has received the most various and conflicting interpretations, and given rise to endless discussion. Let us, then, as we approach the consideration of it, understand the special call there is for caution of investigation and modesty of statement. And, as the inquiry will be immediately concerning our Lord's mediatorial work, let us with special earnestness invoke the guidance of the Spirit of Christ—Christ's great Witness in the Church.

What seems obvious enough on a careful reading of the passage and context is, that the last five verses of this chapter and the first six verses of the next together form one continuous section, and that that section, as introduced here by the initial '*For*'—*because**—of v. 18, is an argument confirmatory of the previous exhortation to a 'patient continuance in well-doing.' † It is only when we come to analyze the argument, and determine all the elements that enter into its construction, that the chief difficulty presents itself. Meanwhile, let it be noted with thankfulness that, as so often happens in such cases, what lies on the surface, and is least liable to

* ὅτι.

† Rom. 2 : 7.

doubt or misapprehension, is just that which it is most important for us to know. Thus, however dark and impenetrable may be the cloud of mystery that overhangs the middle portion of the way we have to traverse, every eye can clearly discern its commencement and its termination—the former in the vicarious sufferings and atoning death of the Saviour, the latter in His triumphant ascension and session at God's right hand. To the first of these great themes, and its bearing on the present life of Christians, our attention is confined by the words now before us, in which Peter once more delivers his testimony, as 'a witness of the sufferings of Christ:'* '*Because Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.*' Formerly, (ch. 2 : 21, etc.,) it was rather Christ's patient bearing in His sufferings, that came prominently into view;† here it is the redeeming and reconciling power of the sufferings themselves.

And, because this too depends primarily on the person and character of the Sufferer, you will not overlook the import of the Apostle's designation of Him as *Christ, the Just One.*

He is '*Christ*'—the Messiah—called of God, and divinely qualified for the highest exercise of those offices, to which under the old economy men were consecrated by unction. He is the anointed Prophet, Priest, and King of the Church, on whom, in fulfilment of the ancient oracle, 'the Spirit of the Lord rests, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.'‡

And not only is He thus officially accredited by God's own seal; personally also He is '*just*'—*righteous*§—'holy, harmless, undefiled.' He was 'that holy thing'‖ born of the Virgin; and, as He was born, so He lived, and so He died; though passing through the midst of the world's conflicts and pollutions, as the sun through a cloudy, tempestuous sky, and going down at last, so to speak, in a hurricane of wrath.

For Christ, the Righteous One, was nevertheless a sufferer.

* Ch. 5 : 1. † Comp. *Lecture* xvi. ‡ Is. 11 : 2.
§ As in ch. 3 : 12 and 4 : 18. ‖ Heb. 7 : 26; Luke 1 : 35.

'*Christ also suffered;*'* He suffered '*once*'—once for all—once and no more. 'Taking in all,' says Leighton, 'He suffered once—His whole life was one continued line of suffering from the manger to the cross. All that lay betwixt was suitable; His state and entertainment throughout His whole life agreed well with so mean a beginning, and so reproachful an end of it.' But I think the word may also be taken as an anticipation and preluding note of the triumph that bursts forth in the 22d verse. He '*suffered once,*' and there His sufferings ended. 'He died unto sin once;' but, 'being raised from the dead, He dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him.'†

Of His sufferings, while they lasted, who shall dare to speak in detail? We know little more of them, than that they were peculiar and unparalleled, from devils, from men, and from God. He was the Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief—His visage so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men.' Legions of foul, malignant spirits were allowed their hour and power of darkness against the Son of God. But He was not their Saviour. Alas! 'He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.' He was 'despised and rejected of men; and we hid as it were our faces from Him; He was despised, and we esteemed Him not.' Even of those whom He had chosen out of the world, and admitted to the intimacies of friendship, one betrayed Him, another denied Him, and in His last hour of trial they all forsook Him and fled. Hence, in the book of Psalms, in which are so many things written concerning Christ, He makes frequent use of such language as the following: 'Reproach hath broken my heart, and I am full of heaviness; and I looked for some to take pity, but there were none; and for comforters, but I found none.' All these sufferings, however, though severe, He might have borne in silence; but when His Father whom He loved—in whose bosom He had lain from eternity—and whom He had sought to glorify upon the earth, doing always

* Historic time, as in ch. 2 : 21; Heb. 5 : 8, etc. For ἔπαθε, Wells and Lachmann read ἀπέθανε, [ν,] *died* (Sin. A, C, Syriac and Vulgate, Cyprian, etc.) Sin. also omits καί.

† Rom. 6 : 9, 10, (ἐφάπαξ.)

the things that pleased Him—when He also 'forsook' Him, and flung darkness and terrors on His soul, then did the Holy and the Just cry out in an agony, and He became 'exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.'* But let us not seek to pierce the awful depths of this greatest tragedy, when one of those who followed Jesus into the shades of Gethsemane limits himself to saying in the simplest phrase: '*Christ also suffered.*'

But how, you may well ask, was it possible that such a one, under the Divine government should suffer at all? And the difficulty would be real and serious but for the authoritative solution of God's own word: 'He suffered *for sins*,' that is, they were penal sufferings—'*the righteous for the unrighteous*,'† that is, they were vicarious sufferings.

He 'suffered *for sins*,' or—(for the preposition‡ is not the same as that in the next clause)—*concerning, in relation to, on account of*, sins. This so far determines the quality of His sufferings. They were the effect and expression of the Divine displeasure; and there is nothing in the universe but sin, that is an object of dislike to God. Christ's sufferings, however, could not be of a corrective or disciplinary character. The Righteous One needed no chastisement at His Father's hand. Yet sin, we are expressly told, was the occasion and cause of His sufferings. They even furnished the most terrible exemplification that the world ever witnessed of the eternal and universal law, 'The wages of sin is death.'§

It is, then, farther obvious that these penal sufferings, if not the reward of Christ's own demerit, nor intended to purify and subdue His own heart to the Divine law, must have been the result of some judicial arrangement. In other words, they were vicarious—endured by the Saviour, not as being Himself a sinner, but as the sinner's Surety. He

* Is. 52 : 14; 53 : 3; John 1 : 11; Ps. 69 : 20; Matt. 26 : 38, 56; 27 : 46, etc.

† *ἀδίκων*. The reference is to general character, as in 1 Cor. 6 : 9. Before *ἁμαρτιῶν* Sin. inserts *τῶν*, and after it Sin. adds *ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν*.

‡ *περί*—which in most cases is, in such a connection, sufficiently well rendered by *for*. But where, as here and Eph. 6 : 18, 19, it is in the same sentence exchanged for *ὑπέρ*, it seems proper that we should recognize the specific difference of the two particles.

§ Rom. 6 : 23.

'suffered, *the Righteous for*'—in the room of—'*the unrighteous;*'* a statement perfectly sufficient of itself to establish the vital doctrines of the substitution, and consequent atonement, if only it be allowed that a plain scriptural statement can establish any thing. But you are well aware that just such statements as the present abound in the Bible. That 'Christ died for our sins'—'died for the ungodly'—this, Paul asserts, is 'according to the Scriptures;'† as if the sacrificial death of the unblemished and unspotted Lamb of God were the grand, leading fact to which they testify—the very burden of all Divine revelation.

And now mark the design of Christ, the Righteous One, in giving Himself to suffering and death for the unrighteous. Of God's ulterior designs in this the most wondrous of His ways we know very little, because very little has been revealed. But, whatever be the bearings of this Divine procedure on the history of the universe, of this we are assured, that the immediate thought of Christ's heart was *to bring men to God.*

Formerly, then, we were at a distance from God; and this implies ignorance of His character and will—enmity and alienation—moral dissimilarity—and the want of any favorable intercourse and fellowship. In all these respects we, who 'some time were far off, are made nigh'‡ through a suffering Mediator. 'No man cometh unto the Father but by Him;'§ and every pilgrim takes Calvary in his way. There at last, and only there, do we attain to any just and satisfying views concerning the Supreme Being, and our relations to Him.

We have no reason to think that it was in consequence of any thing resembling miraculous interference, that man after the fall lost the knowledge of God, which he originally possessed. It was only by degrees, and as it were through the thickening shades of the twilight, that night advanced, and spread her pall over the nations. But the dismal process

* In Greek without the articles: *Righteous for unrighteous.*
† Rom. 5 : 6; 1 Cor. 15 : 3. ‡ Eph. 2 : 13. § John 14 : 6.

began from the hour of the first transgression. Adam, hiding from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden, is the visible embodiment of the moral tendencies of the race throughout all the subsequent generations of the world. Fearing God, man wishes and struggles to forget Him. 'Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways'*—is the dread defiance inscribed, as with hell-fire, on our ruined nature. Nor is there, in history or philosophy, any one thing more certain than this, that, but for the provisions and influences of grace, the separation between God and man must have been perpetual and ever-widening.

Now, those gracious provisions and influences all centre in the cross of Christ, and flow forth from it. 'God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. . . . For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.'† And not only is the curse repealed. Not only does the believer, however in himself guilty and worthless, stand clear in law from every legal demand and penalty. Not only is he thus relieved from all fearful forebodings of coming wrath. His 'whole spirit and soul and body'‡ pass under the sway of a new and sanctifying power, even the love of Him who first loved us. Receiving into his heart the Spirit of adoption, he now calls God Father, and delights in His law, and rests in His embrace. His fellowship is with the Father and the Son. These glorious Guests dwell with him, and sit with him, and, by the very shining of their presence, gradually change the man from glory to glory into the same image, until, that image perfected, he is lifted up within the veil of God's own pavilion. There shall the followers of the suffering Christ be brought very near to God,§ and they shall see His face, and sit at His table, and for ever hymn His praise. But, amidst the triumphs and ecstasies of the Church in those high climes of bliss, the lowliness of the manger, and the agony of the garden and the blood of Calvary, and the darkness of Joseph's sepulchre, shall never be forgotten.

* Job. 21 : 14. † 2 Cor. 5 : 19, 21. ‡ 1 Thess. 15 : 23.
§ Note the strength of the phrase: *ἵνα προσαγάγῃ τῷ Θεῷ.*—Sin. omits *ἡμάς*

'They sing a new song, saying, Thou art worthy; for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.'*

But I must not omit to ask you to notice, in conclusion, how every word of our text tells on the writer's immediate purpose, as that was before explained. Thus,

1. What a strong consolation is it to the suffering children of God, that '*Christ also suffered*'! 'Though he were a Son'—and such a Son, as none may be compared with Him—'yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered.' He was 'in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.'† As Leighton again has it: 'One Son without sin; but not one without suffering.'

2. And how is the force of this consideration strengthened by reflecting, in the second place, that He *was* a *sinless* Sufferer, and that Jesus Christ, the *Righteous*, suffered, not for Himself, but *for us unrighteous!* Shall not we, who have so long and so deeply sinned, be as ready to suffer, where we ourselves have all the benefit, or for Christ's glory, and the edification of His Church?

3. Again, that the holy Son of God, our Saviour, suffered *on account of sins*, ought surely to deepen our hatred of that which brought Him so low! What more shocking perversity of ingratitude can be conceived, than so to abuse His love as, on the strength of it, to take indulgence in sin, thus making the Righteous One the minister of unrighteousness—yea, 'crucifying to ourselves the Son of God afresh, and putting Him to an open shame'!‡

4. Once more, believers, rejoice that your Lord suffered but *once*, and so entered into His glory. The word is full of blessed omen for you also. For all that are Christ's, as for Christ Himself, 'weeping may endure for a night; but joy cometh in the morning.'§ The Man of Sorrows is now with God, and still He prosecutes the end for which He suffered,

* Rev. 5 : 9, 10. † Heb. 4 : 15; 5 : 8. ‡ Heb. 6 : 6. § Ps. 30 : 5.

namely, *that He might bring* you also to that same Presence. Already He has brought you, sprinkled with blood, as far as the blood-sprinkled mercy-seat. Nor will the Good Shepherd, who gave His life for the sheep, forsake His charge, till He has them safe within His heavenly fold.

5. And, finally, must it not be said, Alas for the man who refuses to accept of the guidance of such a Leader—who has never yet, it may be, taken the first earnest step on the consecrated, upward path! That man, whosoever he be, is 'yet in his sins'—he is 'unjust still.'* He knows no comfortable communion with God on earth, and has no hope of beholding His face in righteousness—of being satisfied, when he awakes from this dream of life or from the bed of death, with His likeness.† No; living or dead, if found at that great day, toward which the agitated current of this world's affairs is swiftly rushing, still estranged from God, he 'shall be punished'—even according to his sins; punished—'with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power.'‡ The man that so meets His descending Judge—unreconciled, and alienated from the life and love of God—shall be hurried forth by whirlwinds to a waste, howling wilderness—a dry, parched land where no water is—where no light of the sun nor of the stars appears—where no sleep refreshes, and hope never comes; but, as the blighted soul wanders on through eternity, the only memorial of the existence of Him who is Almighty will be the ever-thickening reverberations, bursting all around its path, of that voice of doom, 'Depart from me'!

Ah sinner! it need not, it cannot, be so, unless you will have it so. It is the same voice that now says: 'Come unto me.' '*Christ suffered . . . that He might bring us to God.*' Shun alike indifference and despair. There is no other way of escape; but in this way all that will come may come, and shall in no wise be cast out. Say not, if ever you are brought to serious conviction of sin, that you are a sinner—'*Christ suffered for sins;*' or even that you are the chief of sinners—Christ makes no exceptions, and why should you make any?

* 1 Cor. 15 : 17; Rev. 22 : 11. † Ps. 17 : 15. ‡ 2 Thess. 1 : 9.

Come to Christ! Come, indeed, with lowliest confession. Come in tears, and smiting upon your breast. But come also in faith; and come at once and without delay. Only come to Christ, and to God by Him. To all doubts and fears let it be your sufficient answer, that '*Christ suffered*'—that 'it is Christ that died.'*

* Rom. 8 : 34.—A comparison of this *Lecture* with Dr. John Brown's *Discourse* (published since the *Lecture* was written) on the same text, will detect a few traces of resemblance, which the writer has not at all cared to obliterate. They pleasantly remind him of how much he owes to the instructions received in early life from the lips of that venerable man.

Lecture XXII.

1 *PETER* 3 : 18–20.

'Being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.'

The confessed difficulty of this passage* makes it the more needful, first of all, that we get as near as we can to an exact representation of the original phraseology.

This our common version fails to give in at least one important particular. When our translators speak of Christ as '*quickened by the Spirit*,' they no doubt do something toward facilitating and determining the interpretation; but the advantage is gained at the expense of an arbitrary variation, not only from the older English versions, but from the Apostle's Greek. That would be strictly rendered thus: '*Being put to death, indeed, in flesh, but quickened in spirit.*' † And in connection with this it should be noted that the expression '*by which*' of the next verse would more naturally be '*in which.*' ‡

Again, it is universally agreed that the word '*once*' of the 20th verse has no right to be there, having been nothing more than a conjecture of the editor of the first printed New

* Estius: 'Locus hic omnium pene interpretum judicio difficillimus.'

† *θανατωθεὶς μὲν σαρκὶ, ζωοποιηθεὶς δέ πνεύματι.* The change of the two participles into accusatives in agreement with *ἡμᾶς (us)* of the previous clause—(so the Codex Amiatinus, the Sixtine Vulgate, Bede, etc.)—is of no authority, and probably originated in the mistake of a copyist.—The *τῷ* before *πνεύματι (the Spirit)* has long been rejected by all critical editors, (Sin. etc.)

‡ *ἐν ᾧ.*

Testament.* The last clause also of that verse is perhaps more readily understood, if we say that Noah and his company were saved, not '*by water*'—as if the water, and not the ark, had been the means of their deliverance,† but *through water*‡—they having been carried clear through it, and so saved from it, instead of being lost in the overwhelming flood. The manner, however, in which the baptismal water is presently referred to in the 21st verse, seems to render it probable that here likewise there is a silent allusion to the favorable action of the water in Noah's case, as the element on which the ark itself rode secure over a lost world.

With these modifications, then, and one or two others of less moment, the passage before us may be read thus: '*Being put to death, indeed, in flesh, but quickened in spirit; in which going He preached*'—or, *He went and preached*—'*also to the spirits in prison, disobedient sometime*'§—*once, formerly*—'*when the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing, in which* ‖ *few***—*that is, eight souls were saved through water.*' This, perhaps, is as close a translation as can well be given. Let us now inquire into the meaning of the whole statement.††

The great question evidently—that on the answer to which depends the adjustment of various subordinate particulars—

* Erasmus—for whose ἅπαξ ἐξεδέχετο all now read ἀπεξεδέχετο, (Sin. A, B, C, etc., Vulgate, etc.) The latter is one of Paul's favorite compounds.

† The view, however, of some, as Estius, Pott, Jachmann, Alford.

‡ διεσώθησαν δι' ὕδατος. The preposition cannot well be taken in a different sense from that which it bears in the associate verb; though it has been variously rendered *in the midst of, in*, (Pagninus, Beza, Grotius, etc.,) *on*, (Martini, Carpzov, Wakefield, etc.,) *during, in the time of*, (Benson, Semler, etc.) Comp. διὰ πυρός of 1 Cor. 3 : 15.

§ ἐν ᾧ καὶ τοῖς ἐν φυλακῇ πνεύμασι πορευθεὶς ἐκήρυξεν, ἀπειθήσασί ποτέ.

‖ The δι' ὕδατος, compared with Gen. 7 : 7, etc., forbids us to explain εἰς ἣν as marking the *terminus in quem* of the deliverance, (as 2 Tim. 4 : 18; comp. Acts 23 : 24, etc.;) and accordingly the Syriac solution is generally adopted: *into which entering*, etc.

** Wells, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Bloomfield, Alford, read ὀλίγοι, (Sin. A, B. Vulgate, Origen, Cyprian, etc.;) while the common reading, ὀλίγαι, has suggested the above, or equivalent, punctuation in many editions and versions.

†† Interesting sketches of the history of the interpretation may be found in Pott, De Wette, Huther, Wiesinger, Alford.

is this: What was that ministry of Christ to which the Apostle here refers? When—toward whom—for what purpose—was it exercised?

I. The view, that is now generally taken on these points in the Protestant churches, is said to have been first broached by Augustine in the fourth century, and is to the effect, that the preaching spoken of took place in the antediluvian period, when the Spirit of Christ, as He is called in the first chapter of our Epistle, 'strove with man,' and Noah, the 'preacher of righteousness,' and prophet of the coming doom, stood up under His inspiration, and by word and act 'condemned the world' of the ungodly.* These ungodly, it has been thought, may be said to have been at that time '*spirits in prison*,' inasmuch as they were then held in the bondage of the flesh and of ignorance.† Or, should this be reckoned a little fanciful or far-fetched, still the designation may be derived from their present condition as disembodied spirits, reserved in the custody of the Divine justice unto the judgment of the great day, though, when Christ preached to them, they were living men in the flesh.‡

It was doubtless with a favorable eye to this interpretation, that our translators introduced the peculiarity, already noticed, of their version, '*quickened by the Spirit, by which also, etc.*' But the questionable rendering is not essential to the general view, as it has just been stated. This may be held, though we should take *spirit* here as the name, not of the Holy Spirit, but of Christ's own spiritual personality, or, in other words, as that, not by which, but in regard to which, He was quickened.

There is evidently a strong contrast intended between the '*flesh*,' as to which Christ was '*put to death*,' and the '*spirit*,' as to which He was '*quickened;*' and it will be well to see what may be learned for our present guidance from the frequent occurrence of the same contrast elsewhere in Scripture.

Thus, of our Lord Himself it is said that He 'was made of

* Gen. 6 : 3 ; 2 Pet. 2 : 5 ; Heb. 11 : 7. † So Augustine, etc.
‡ So Beza, etc.

the seed of David according to the flesh'—as to His human nature, so far as he was truly a man—'and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the 'spirit of holiness'—in regard, that is, to the higher spiritual essence that dwelt in the Man Christ Jesus—'by the resurrection from the dead.' And so, when we read that He, who 'was manifested in flesh,' was 'justified in spirit,' we understand the latter expression as announcing the result of the shining forth, through the veil of His humanity, and out of the lowly conditions of His life on earth, of the glory of the Eternal Son.* Now, as the Word, made flesh, became subject to eclipse—to weakness and death, so, when His Divinity reasserted itself in His resurrection, I see not why, in perfect accordance with the New Testament style of speaking on the subject of our Lord's person and history, the returning brightness might not properly be described as a being '*quickened in spirit*'—a revival in quenchless manifestation of that very nature, which wrought in the beginning in the creation of the worlds, and ever onward in the administration of the realms of providence and grace, but which now since the incarnation, and especially in the mysterious interval that followed the crucifixion, had rested in silence and self-abnegation.

This contrast, however, of the '*flesh*' and the '*spirit*' admits of another explanation equally reconcilable, I conceive, with that view of the passage, that we are now considering. Ordinarily, as you are aware, these terms are used to distinguish respectively the natural and the regenerate state of man—the latter as even now begun in the children of God, and tending ever to its consummation in the resurrection, when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and the natural body shall itself be changed into a fitting spiritual organ of the sanctified and glorified spirit. But this change also our blessed Lord underwent, in rising from the dead. In His case, as in ours, 'that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is

* Rom. 1 : 3, 4 ; 1 Tim. 3 : 16, (*ἐφανερώθη ἐν σαρκὶ, ἐδικαιώθη ἐν πνευματι.*) Comp. the *διὰ πνεύματος αἰωνίου* of Heb. 9 : 14.

spiritual.' He had been in all things made like unto His brethren—in all points tempted like as we are, though without sin. Conceived of the Virgin by the power of the Holy Ghost, He was ever, and from the beginning, a 'holy thing.' In that consisted the great, and the only, difference between His manhood and ours. The second Adam, while He tabernacled among us, was no reflection or repetition of the first Adam, as God created him. The Babe of Bethlehem was 'made a curse for us.' Not only did He assume our nature; He assumed it in that state of condemnation, and humiliation, and weakness of the flesh, into which it was brought by the fall. Before, therefore, He could save us after the power of an endless life, He needed Himself to be made perfect through sufferings, and saved from death. The curse could pass away only through the exhaustion of its terrors on Him who bore it for our sakes. The whole life of the flesh must come to a bloody and perpetual end. He was '*put to death in flesh*.' And then, that He might not, after all, lose the gracious end for which He suffered, but, as the 'quickening Spirit' of the new creation, might beget sons in His own heavenly likeness, and, so 'bring us to God,' He was himself also, as an equally indispensable preliminary, '*quickened in spirit*.'*

Observe, then, that before His manifestation in flesh, and after His resurrection, our Lord Jesus Christ may be said to have lived in spirit. In the latter case His spiritual humanity subsisted in mysterious personal union with the Divine essence. But the spiritual element was common to both conditions of His being. And in both the excelling glory was the Divine; insomuch that when He, who was '*put to death in flesh*,' was '*quickened in spirit*,' it would be fully accordant with the analogy of Scripture to overlook the economical modification, and speak of Him as reëntering the glory which He had with the Father before the world was.† Just as Immanuel could say of Himself, 'Before Abraham was, I

* 1 Cor. 15 : 44, 45, 53; Heb. 2 : 10, 17; 4 : 15; 5 : 7; 7 : 16; Luke 1 : 35; Gal 3 : 13.

† John 17 : 5.

am. . . . I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father,' so, on the same ground of the unchangeable and all-pervading identity of His Godhead—'the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever'*—the inspired writers freely and everywhere represent Him, to whom they all bear witness, as remaining one and the same Person through all historical transitions, and through every variety of experience and operation.† In the bold, popular language of the New Testament, He, who was in the beginning with God—by whom God made the worlds—who spake to Moses in Mount Sinai, and led the tribes through the wilderness—was in the fulness of time born of a woman, died on Calvary, arose from the dead, and now liveth at the right hand of God. Would it involve any greater latitude of statement to say that, '*being put to death in flesh*,' He was '*quickened in spirit*'—made alive again in that higher sphere of spiritual energy and enlargement, in which He acted of old as the universal Lord, and in particular announced the coming wrath, and called the world to repentance, in the days of Noah, though at that time the lower nature of the God-Man, as now crowned with glory and honor, had no existence?

It is objected that the phrase, '*He went and preached*,' implies a personal locomotion, such as could not well be predicated of Him whose presence fills heaven and earth. But this cannot be admitted as conclusive, when we read that very soon after the flood 'the Lord *came down* to see the city and the tower which the children of men builded. And the Lord said: . . . Go to, *let us go down*, and there confound their language.'‡ And the parallel statement respecting the crucified and risen Saviour, that He 'came and preached peace to them which were afar off, and to them that were nigh,'§ when that ministry certainly was fulfilled through His Spirit and Apostles, equally demonstrates that an actual bodily movement is not at all required to justify what is really a perfectly familiar idiom.

* John 8 : 58; 16 : 28; Heb. 13 : 8.
† See, for example, Phil. 2 : 5–11; Heb. 1 : 1–4, etc.
‡ Gen. 11 : 5–7. § Eph. 2 : 17. Comp. Acts 26 : 23, (Greek.)

On the whole, therefore, I am disposed to acquiesce in this explanation of the passage, as fairly deducible from the words, and encumbered with the fewest difficulties. But of its comparative merits in these respects you will be better able to judge, when we have glanced briefly at the more prominent rival theories.

II. Of these the one that was generally received by the earlier Fathers, and has since been prevalent in the Roman Catholic Church, and has been adopted also by not a few eminent Protestant interpreters,* refers the preaching here mentioned to the time between the Lord's death and His resurrection. It took place, therefore, in the world of spirits; but in what it consisted, and to whom it was addressed, and for what purpose, and with what result—to these questions the most various and discordant answers have been given by those who agree on the main point. Thus, it has been conceived of as directed against the devil and his angels; or as a proclamation of judgment, or an offer of mercy, to the dead sinners of Noah's time, or to all the unholy dead of former generations, those of Noah's time being specified merely as belonging to the general class. Or it is restricted to the pious dead of previous dispensations, and to them it brought assurance, consolation, and deliverance, if not from penal imprisonment and purgatorial fire, at least from that limbo of the fathers, or state of dim seclusion, in which they were held in ward and waiting, until the spirit of the Crucified One suddenly appeared among them, announced the completion of the redemption, and opened the kingdom of heaven to them and all believers. Or, finally, the transaction is thought to have combined in itself these elements of terror and of grace. Of course, the being '*quickened in spirit*' likewise occurred in the separate state, immediately after the crucifixion,† and, in so far as it affected our Lord's humanity, consisted either in His soul's liberation from the hindering and depressing influences of the body, or in the com-

* Including Alford.

† Some, however, as Alford, while thus explaining the *going and preaching*, refer the quickening to the resurrection.

mencement of that higher spiritual life which was perfected at the resurrection and ascension.

One modification of the view supposes that the antediluvian sinners spoken of had really been brought to conviction and a gracious repentance, if not directly through Noah's exhortations, while God was patiently waiting and the ark was building, yet after the ark was shut, and by the actual bursting forth of the long-threatened vengeance, in which, therefore, they perished only as to the bodily life, while their spirits were to be saved in the day of the Lord. It is thus sought to harmonize the explicit assertion of the text, that the preaching was to them, with the avoidance of any unscriptural notions respecting the conversion and salvation of the wicked after death.

Of the theory in general it must be allowed that it has some points in its favor. Besides that, by laying the scene in Hades, or the invisible world, it attracts and stimulates the imagination, it is certainly natural, when we are told that Christ '*preached to the spirits in prison*,' to think of them as being there at the time of the preaching.* And then the original sentence is so constructed † as readily to admit the idea—to say the least—that the disobedience of the spirits was not contemporaneous with the preaching, but of a much earlier date.

These advantages, however, are, in my opinion, more than counterbalanced by certain weightier drawbacks:

1. In the first place, you will have noticed that, not only does the view in question take on the most opposite forms, but even in its least objectionable form it assumes a good deal that is not found in the passage, nor anywhere else in Scripture; as, for instance, that there had been repentance unto life in the case of those, of whom nothing more is said than that they were '*disobedient*.'

2. In the second place, while the clause, '*being put to death, indeed, in flesh*' answers well to the preceding statement about

* But see Ruth 1 : 8.

† Especially by the omission of the article before *ἀπειθήσασι*, and by the addition of *ποτέ*.

Christ's having 'suffered for sins, the Righteous for the unrighteous,' there is very little in the additional clause, '*but quickened in spirit*,' as thus explained, to suggest the fulfilment of the great design of those sufferings, 'that He might bring us to God.'

3. Again, I cannot but think that the whole theory attributes to the disembodied spirit of our Lord the exercise of a larger activity and authority than comports with what we are taught generally as to the state of the departed, or, in particular, with His own deepest humiliation under the death of the curse. From that humiliation He emerged only on the morning of the first day.

4. And, lastly, in no other place is the word for *quickening* employed, in the sense that is here ascribed to it, by many who defend this view. Its proper meaning is *to make alive, to impart life*,* and, wherever used in relation to the dead, it invariably implies their return to life through resurrection. †

These considerations, it appears to me, are at least sufficient to forbid a ready concurrence in this second general view, by whatever authority of names it may be supported—the view namely, that the ministry in question was performed by Christ in the spiritual world, while His body still slumbered in the garden.

III. There is, however, a third view, that deserves to be mentioned as having been urged of late by a few distinguished commentators.‡ It avoids most of the objections that I have made to the second view, by taking the *quickening* of the dead Saviour as having been accomplished at His resurrection. And then it supposes that the risen Christ went and preached—not, as some older interpreters would have it, through the Apostles to those then living under the yoke of

* Not *to keep alive*, which some (Corn. a Lapide, Henry More, Rosenmüller, Augusti, Pott, and others) in vain seek to justify by the Old Testament use of the Piel and Hiphil of חָיָה, (Ex. 1 : 17, 18, 22 ; Numb. 22 : 33, etc.,) the Vulgate use of *vivifico*, (1 Sam. 27 : 9 ; 2 Sam. 8 : 2, etc.,) and the Septuagint and New Testament use of ζωογονέω, (Ex. 1 : 17, 18, 22, etc. ; Luke 17 : 33 ; Acts 7 : 19.)

† See John 5 : 21 ; Rom. 4 : 17 ; 8 : 11 ; 1 Cor. 15 : 22.

‡ Huther, De Wette, Wiesinger.

the law, or in bondage to Satan* but in person, in Hades, to the departed spirits of the men of Noah's time, bringing near to them also His great salvation.

Of this I shall only say that, whilst a single clear testimony of Holy Writ suffices, with such as believe in its Divine inspiration, for the establishment of any fact or doctrine, yet, when of a single obscure passage two interpretations are possible, we shall do well to hold to that one which most easily coalesces with the general tenor of Scripture. And, applying this rule to the present case, we shall be confirmed, I think, in our preference of the first and ordinary view, as that has already been stated.

Let us, then, in conclusion see what practical lessons may be drawn from the passage as thus understood.

1. We may well rejoice, in the first place, that He, who for our sakes was '*put to death in flesh*,' has also for our sakes been '*quickened in spirit*.' As another Apostle says: 'If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.'† By His death Christ frees us from the bond of our sins; by His life, and the communication of that same resurrection-life to us, He brings us to God. Only thus it is that, 'as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.'‡

2. In the second place, it is for the glory of our Lord, and so for our greater assurance of faith, that Peter here reminds us that He, in whom alone we trust as the Captain of our salvation, was from the earliest times the Friend and Teacher of our sinful race—the source of every Divine message of warning and grace, that reached it in the days of old.

3. Again, you will note the solemn parallel, suggested by our Apostle in both his Epistles, as it had previously been more than once by Christ Himself,§ between '*the days of*

* Socinus, Vorstius, Grotius, etc. Even Leighton fell latterly into this notion, which Brown also tries in vain to render plausible, or consistent with the Greek text.

† Rom. 5 : 10. ‡ 1 Cor. 15 : 49.

§ 2 Pet. 2 : 5; Luke 17 : 26, 27; Matt. 24 : 37–39.

Noah' and our own New Testament times. Now, brethren, even as then, the long-suffering of God is waiting upon men —patiently waiting—waiting until, as the very form of the original word implies, there is an end of waiting.* For now too, as then, there is a limit set—the day and the hour for the 'revelation of the righteous judgment of God.'† Meanwhile amidst the ferment and rush of all worldly interests and passions, our heavenly Noah, who 'shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed,'‡ is preparing the ark of His Church, and, by His messengers sent forth into all lands, is proclaiming at once the Divine 'goodness and severity.'§ Alas! how few, now as then, believe! and how many mock! But be not ye therefore, beloved, ashamed of your confidence. Now as then, there is wrath coming on a world that has well-nigh exhausted the patience of the Lord; and, now as then, there is but one Divinely ordained refuge. To all that hear me I address once more the warning—entreaty—command—of God's infinite love. The days are evil—the face of the heavens gather blackness—and the old, sin-worn frame of earth gives shuddering premonitions of doom. Turn you to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope. Be not faithless, but believing. Linger no longer. Make haste to flee into this only hiding place from the wind and covert from the tempest, and there—there abide; till the storm is changed into a calm, and the winds are hushed, and the waves are still, and the company of the saved, standing together on their greater Ararat, shall look forth on the eternal bow encircling the new heavens and the new earth of their inheritance, and shall build their altars unto the Lord, whence shall ascend for ever the incense of their praise.

4. The occasion is a suitable one also for again ‖ asking you to remark, in the last place, how very differently Christ and His Apostles treated the Old Testament from some nowadays, who yet profess to honor them. Not only is the Old Testament continually appealed to in the New for proof of

* Bengel: 'Exspectabat, donec exspectandi finis erat.'
† Rom. 2 : 5.
‡ Gen. 5 : 29.
§ Rom. 11 : 22.
‖ See p. 106.

doctrine, but—and it is especially noteworthy—not a few of the Old Testament narratives, which in the New are cited with all reverence, and turned to the most serious uses of evangelical exhortation, are just those at which modern wisdom condescends merely to smile. The history of the creation—the temptation and fall of man—the flood and the ark of Noah—Lot's wife—the passage of the Red Sea—the healing serpent—Balaam's ass—the overthrow of Jericho—Elijah's all-prevalent prayers—Jonah and the whale—with what self-complacent chuckling do our wits and savants amuse themselves over these, and such like, wonderful stories! And yet these, I repeat, are the very stories which our Lord and His inspired servants, in their calm and confident simplicity, do everywhere take for granted, and reason from, as undisputed and indisputable historical facts.* No doubt, the stories are wonderful ; they are truly miraculous—supernatural. But with the supernatural and the miraculous, however sorely it may scandalize a Baden Powell and a Bishop Colenso, the faith of God's children has no difficulty whatever. Nay, that is the element in which faith lives and moves, and has its being. Nor am I now at all undertaking to prove the credibility of these things. I merely assert that the man who does not, and as he says, cannot believe them, is equally incapable, pretend what he may, of rendering due homage to our Lord Jesus Christ and His Apostles, who, it is manifest, did believe them. The choice, then, remember, lies, not between the Old Testament and the New, but between 'the Holy Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments,' and the flippant, boastful, unstable conclusions of our scientific and very unholy age. Methinks, our wisdom will be shown, and our safety and blessing will be found, in holding fast by the former.

* See p. 247, note §; also Matt. 12 : 40; Luke 4 : 25–27; 17 : 32; John 3 : 14; 1 Cor. 11 : 8; 2 Cor. 11 : 3; 1 Tim. 2 : 13, 14; Heb. 11 : 3, 7, 29, 30; James 5 : 17, 18; 2 Pet. 2 : 16, etc.

Lecture XXIII.

1 *PETER* 3 : 21, 22.

'The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ: who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him.'

The immediate object of the writer being to comfort his brethren in their trials, and promote the work of their sanctification, (vs. 13–17,) he is showing them how it had fared with Christ, the holy vicarious Sufferer. He, to whom it was their greatest glory to be in all things conformed, had, '*indeed*,' endured whatever the wrath of man can inflict on the martyrs of truth and righteousness. He had been '*put to death in flesh*.' But even so He did not finally perish. There presently ensued His '*quickening in spirit*,' whereby He regained that original condition of sovereign, gracious activity, in which He had existed and wrought from the beginning, and particularly in the former crisis of the world, '*the days of Noah*.'

This reference to the deluge now serves to introduce a sort of parenthetical corroboration, drawn from the meaning and force of baptism, and then the 22d verse completes the description of the Saviour's triumph.

The main thought of the 21st verse is not essentially affected by a slight change of reading,* which is, however, adopted

* ὃ (A, B, C, Sin.^{2}, Vulgate, Cyprian; and editors generally from Erasmus down. Sin.^{1} has simply καί,) for ᾧ. On doctrinal grounds apparently Calvin prefers the latter, which Bloomfield also retains.

in almost all editions of the Greek Testament, and which, instead of, '*The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us*,' would be rendered thus : '*Which in a like figure now saveth us also*, even *baptism*.'* In either case, if we regard merely what is expressed, and not also what may be suggested, the comparison is not between baptism and the ark,† nor yet generally between the Christian salvation through baptism and Noah's through water,‡ but between the baptismal use and import of water, as that is here explained, and the action of the same element in relation to Noah and his company. To all others, it is true, of that old time, it brought only a destroying vengeance; and so far one might rather have expected to find it said: 'In the deluge water was the instrument of wrath, but now, *on the contrary*, in baptism, of salvation.' It has even been supposed that this is what Peter may have intended.§ But, as in the 20th verse there is nothing whatever said of the perdition of the ungodly, so neither does the language of the 21st verse bear this interpretation. What it does seem most obviously to assert is, that *now*, as formerly, *we too*, as well as the inmates of the ark, lifted up on the swelling but to them friendly waves, *are saved through water*, and that in the one case there is, as our version phrases it, '*a like figure*' of the other.

The Apostle's own word for this is one familiar to us under its English form, *antitype*, which, accordingly, is here employed by many versions and commentators. But, as we now commonly understand that word, it would here imply that the deluge was strictly a type, or a divinely appointed prefiguration, of baptism; and this, whether true or not, is more than

* ὃ καὶ ἡμᾶς (Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford, read ὑμᾶς, after Sin. A,) ἀντίτυπον νῦν (Sin. νῦν ἀντ.) σώζει βάπτισμα. The καί belongs to ἡμᾶς, (ὑμᾶς,) and, whereas the common version makes βάπτισμα the subject of the verb, and ἀντίτυπον an adjective in agreement with it, the relative, according to what I take to be the best construction of the clause, now becomes the subject, with ἀντίτυπον for its adjective and βάπτισμα in apposition.

† So Whitby, Wesley, Martini.

‡ So Beza, and many others.

§ According to one gloss of Hesychius, ἐναντίος, which, indeed, comes nearer to the classical force of ἀντίτυπος. Hammond allows this explanation; but it has been adopted by very few.

can be inferred from the original. Only in sacred and patristic Greek, it would appear, does the term express resemblance at all;* and in every such instance the likeness, if not incidental, is held forth, not as the fulfilment of a prophecy—the substance which a type had foreshadowed—but as itself rather the reflection or counterpart of a model. Thus, in the only other place where the word occurs in the New Testament, Heb. 9 : 24, 'Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures'—*antitypes*—'of the true,' some † would even understand by it the copy of a copy—the copy, that is, not directly of the heavenly things, but of a pattern of the same,‡ shown to Moses in the mount. And so in the case before us, I incline to think, *similarity, correspondence*, is probably all that is meant.§ There is a certain likeness between the water, which in the days of Noah bore up the ark unharmed over the ruins of a world, and the water which now, as baptism, '*saveth us also.*'

But what, you will ask, is baptism, then, a saving ordinance? Certainly; that is just what Christ's Apostle here affirms. Nor is this the only place by any means, in which the New Testament speaks of baptism in a way that would now offend many good people, were it not that the perplexing phraseology is unquestionably scriptural. Recollect, for instance, Peter's own practical application of his pentecostal sermon: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.' And so Ananias in Damascus to the humbled persecutor: 'Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins.' Paul too expressly calls baptism 'the laver of the water' by which Christ purifies His Church; and again, 'the laver of regeneration' by which God saves us. Frequently also he represents it as that by which we are united to Christ, and made partakers of His death and resurrection. Nay, Christ Himself, in sending forth His Gospel among all

* Passow cites, as a classical example, Polyb. 6. 31. 8. But his interpretation, *in ähnlicher Form*, is questionable. I should then prefer *gegenüber, over against.*

† As Bleek and Stier.

‡ Heb. 8 : 5, τύπος.

§ Hesychius: Αντίτυπος, ἴσος. ὅμοιος. In the Greek Church the bread and wine of the Eucharist are called ἀντίτυπα of the body and blood of Christ; see Suicer's *Thesaurus, s. v.*

nations, named baptism as one condition of salvation. We need not, then, hesitate to call it a saving ordinance. *

But how does it save? Just as any other ordinance saves —not through any inherent virtue of its outward signs and processes, but solely as it is a channel for the communication of Divine grace, and used in accordance with the Divine intention. On the one hand, while grace is ordinarily dispensed through ordinances, it is not confined to them, God being ever higher than His own appointments, and acting, when it so pleases Him, independently of them altogether. And, on the other hand, there must be on the part of man, besides the observance of the formal precept, a yielding of his whole nature to the quickening and transforming influence.

Take for an example that greatest ordinance, the word of God. It 'is able,' says James, (1 : 21,) 'to save your souls.' But how? Not simply as it is preached, or heard, or read. That it may be 'the power of God unto salvation,' it must first be accompanied with 'the demonstration of the Spirit,' and then 'received with meekness,' and so become 'the engrafted word.' It is not the foolishness of preaching that saves; but 'it pleases God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.' †

Now just so with baptism. Equally with the Gospel itself, it is a Divine institution, whereby God ordinarily dispenses His grace. But its whole efficacy is due to that grace of God, and to our fitting reception and use of the rite, not to its mere external administration, by whatsoever priestly or apostolic hand. Observe how Peter himself here defines his meaning.

Water, he says, saves us—is saving us—exerting a salutary influence to that end; not, indeed, as water, nor even as the visible sign of invisible grace, but as '*baptism*,' and that in the fulness of its essential, evangelical import. This, on the side of the baptized, which, agreeably to the ethical and hortatory drift of the context, is alone presented, consists '*not*'

* Acts 2 : 38; 22 : 16; Eph. 5 : 26, (καθαρίσας τῷ λουτρῷ τοῦ ὕδατος;) Tit. 3 : 5, (λουτροῦ;) Gal. 3 : 27; Rom. 6 : 3, 4; Col. 2 : 12; Mark 16 : 16.

† Rom. 1 : 16; 1 Cor. 1 : 21; 2 : 4.

in '*the putting away of the filth of the flesh*'*—not in any outward or ceremonial purity—not in such a 'purifying of the flesh,' for instance, as was effected by the sacrifices and 'divers washings' of the law†—but in '*the answer of a good conscience toward God.*' Here it becomes evident that the Apostle is thinking only of the inward and spiritual, whatever difficulty there may be in ascertaining the precise import of the clause.

The word for '*answer*'‡ is in the New Testament found only in this place, and, according to its derivation and classical usage, means rather *a question, inquiry.* Hence a variety of interpretations,§ such as these: *the inquiring, request, application to God of a good conscience* for salvation, direction, etc.; || *the act of a good conscience in inquiring after, seeking, God;*** *the interrogating a good conscience before God;*†† *the asking God for a good conscience;*‡‡ and so forth. But not one of these explanations appears to state any positive characteristic of baptism as the initiatory rite of the Christian life. It is not easy to see in what sense it can be said, that the believer is at that time saved either by his own bare seeking or asking, or by his being himself interrogated. And, for this reason, while it is commonly believed that there is an allusion here to the catechising of the candidate, which preceded the administration of the ordinance, there is also a quite general consent among commentators in favor of taking Peter's expression as including the *answer* to the question—a view in favor of which many things are alleged, with which

* The words *ἀπόθεσις* and *ῥύπος* are used only by Peter; the former again in the second Epistle, ch. 1 : 14.

† Heb. 9 : 10, 13. ‡ *ἐπερώτημα.*

§ According as *συνειδήσεως* is taken for a genitive of the subject or of the object, and this in connection with the sense put upon *εἰς.*

|| So apparently some of the older Latin and English versions; also Hammond, Wells, Bengel, Moldenhawer, Steiger, Jachmann, etc.

** Bretschneider, Greenfield, Wahl, Winer, Von der Heydt, Alford. In support of this, reference is made to Rom. 10 : 20; Sept. 2 Sam. 11 : 7; and the דָּרַשׁ לֵאלֹהִים of the Old Testament—Greenfield's phrase here.

†† Diodati's note, Stolz, Hottinger, supposes the interrogating to be 'done by the priest instead of God, or by Divine authority.'

‡‡ Seb. Schmidt, as cited by De Wette; Wiesinger, Weiss.

you need not be troubled.* But it is worth mentioning that the old Syriac version gives this as the sense: *when ye confess God with a pure conscience;* and, among the earliest English versions, Tyndale and Cranmer have it thus: *in that a good conscience consenteth to God.*

Consider, then, what is scripturally implied in '*a good conscience.*'

It is, first of all, a *blood-sprinkled* conscience; or, in the language of the Epistle to the Hebrews, a 'heart sprinkled from an evil conscience,' and so 'having no more conscience of sins'—these having been for ever cancelled by the one effectual sacrifice of the cross. And then it is a *sanctified* conscience—a conscience 'purged from dead works to serve the living God,' and already assured of finding in that service 'all its salvation and all its desire.'†

When such a soul, therefore, comes to the baptismal font, it comes not in hesitancy or doubt, or in search of an unknown God, but solemnly to ratify in the appointed way its own previous act of self-surrender. It enters within the sacred munitions of the everlasting covenant, and, laying hold of the promises, engages the Divine grace for its defence and

* They are here subjoined for the sake of the critical reader: 1. On the general principle determining the signification of verbals in *μα*, *ἐπερώτημα* would denote, not the act of inquiring, (*ἐπερώτησις,*) but *τὸ ἐπερωτηθέν*, *the thing asked*, (Stephens, 11066. '*ἐπερώτημα* i. q. *ἐρώτημα;*' and this last he defines, 'id de quo quis interrogat, s. interrogatur;')—2. Some such explanation, even if it involve a metonymy, seems advisable in the case of *ἐρώτημα* (De Wette, *Spruch)* at Sir. 36 [3] : 3, and necessary in the case of *ἐπερώτημα* at Sept. Dan. 4 : 14, (English Bible, 17.) In the latter instance the Hebrew is שְׁאֵלְתָּא, (Gesenius, *causa, decretum;* Robinson, *decree;)*—3. Œcumenius makes the word equivalent to *ἀρραβων*, *ἐνέχυρον*, *ἀπόδειξις*, *an earnest, pledge, demonstration;*—4. The glossaries (see Stephens, vol. 8) define *ἐπερωτῶμαι* by *promitto, spondeo, stipulor*, and *ἐπερῶτησις* by *ὁμολογία, stipulatio;* as, in like manner, Greek law-books call a promise *ἐπερωτηθέν*, Grotius referring to Theophilus, *Institutiones de verborum Obligationibus.* (Taking *ἐπερ.* here in this sense, several German commentators, including Pott, Meyer, De Wette, and Huther, prefer also to consider *συνειδήσεως* an objective genitive, like *ῥύπου* of the previous clause;=*the promise, pledge, to God, of keeping a good conscience;)*—5. Tertullian perhaps alludes to the present text in *De Res. Carn.* 48: 'Anima enim non lavatione, sed responsione, sanciturʼ: 'The soul is consecrated, not by washing, but by answering or restipulation;'—6. And, finally, an analogous use of *interrogatio*, as=*sponsio*, is found in Seneca, *De Benef.* 3. 15.

† Heb. 10 : 2, 22; 9 : 14; 2 Sam. 23 : 5.

guidance. The transaction is one wholly between it and God, and, on the part of the soul, could not be better described than as its '*answer*' to the overtures and commands of the Gospel—'*the stipulation toward God** *of a good conscience.*' God having said, 'Repent, and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,' the answer of the soul in baptism is, 'Behold, I am vile. Wash me, and I shall be clean. Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief.' God says, 'Come unto me, and I will give thee rest;' and the soul answers, 'Lo, I come. To whom shall I go but unto Thee? Thou hast the words of eternal life.' Says God, 'Thou art mine; and I will be thy God;' and the response of the wondering and adoring soul is, 'My Lord and my God.'—Such is the apostolic idea of true Christian baptism, considered merely in respect of what it involves on the side of the baptized; and of such baptism certainly we need not fear to say, that it saves us.

But you will now observe farther, on what depends this saving efficacy of baptism, even in the case of a penitent and obedient soul. It '*saveth us . . . through*† *the resurrection of Jesus Christ*'—in consequence, that is, of the relations into which we are thus brought to the risen Saviour.‡ 'Know ye not,' argues Paul, when expounding what he regarded as the first principles of the Gospel salvation, 'that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that, like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For, if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection.'§ In the very opening of our Epistle, the writer had spoken of the regeneration, and the consequent filial

* Such is the Greek order and construction: ἐπερώτημα εἰς Θεόν.

† διά—as in ch. 1 : 3.

‡ This is the common construction of δι' ἀναστάσεως I. X., and is better than any other that has been proposed; as with the whole of the sentence, (Steiger;) —with ἐπερώτημα (Piscator, Grotius, Moldenhawer, Carpzov, Augusti, Pott, Hensler, Meyer;)—with συνειδ. ἀγ. εἰς Θ., as expressing the means by which such a conscience is obtained, (Grashof, Brown.)

§ Rom. 6 : 3–5.

standing and hope of the Church, as the fruit of our Lord's deliverance from death. Here he traces to the same fact in the history of redemption the saving power of baptism, as one of those ligatures of grace that connects Christ's Body with its living Head.

The whole discussion tends to show how very far the tone of the New Testament, in dealing with the sacraments, is from justifying either the faithless indifference and neglect with which they are regarded by many Protestants as innocent but superfluous formalities, or the Romish superstition that would turn them into magical charms and incantations at the disposal of the priest.

'In treating of the sacraments,' says Calvin, 'two things are to be considered; the sign and the thing signified. Thus, in baptism the sign is water; but the thing signified is the cleansing of the soul by the blood of Christ, and the mortification of the flesh. Both of these things are comprised in the institution of Christ; and, whereas often the sign appears to be ineffectual and fruitless, that comes through men's abuse, which does not annul the nature of the sacrament. Let us learn, therefore, not to tear apart the thing signified from the sign; though at the same time we must be on our guard against the opposite fault, such as prevails among Papists. For, failing to make the needful distinction between the thing and the sign, they stop short at the outward element, and there confidently rest their hope of salvation. The sight of the water, accordingly, withdraws their minds from Christ's blood and the grace of the Spirit. Not reflecting that of all the blessings there exhibited Christ alone is the Author, they transfer to water the glory of His death, and bind the hidden energy of the Spirit to the visible sign. What, then, must be done? Let us not separate what the Lord has joined together. We ought in baptism to recognize a spiritual laver; we ought in it to embrace a witness to the remission of sins and a pledge of our renewal; and yet so to leave both to Christ and the Holy Spirit the honor that is theirs, as that no part of the salvation be transferred to the sign.'*

* 'Porro quum de Sacramentis agitur, duo sunt consideranda, signum et res.

Having thus, in the sweep of his discourse, been brought within full view again of the person of his Lord, the Apostle at once confirms and clenches the various motives to a patient, holy life, that had been drawn from the Saviour's past career, by a reference to His present condition of glory and power. '*Who is on the right hand of God,* having gone into heaven, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject unto Him.*' †

If the self-denial and sufferings of the holy Jesus were great, great also was His reward. When the crucified Nazarene rose from the dead, it was no ordinary triumph that awaited Him. His path was upward, far above all thrones of earth, to the very topmost pinnacle of honor and dominion in heaven itself. He '*went into heaven,*' and there was welcomed by shouting angels, and by the smile of His Father, saying unto Him: 'Sit Thou at my right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool.' ‡

Behold, then, O suffering Church of God! this great Example after which thou art called—the Man of Sorrows, who 'suffered for' thy 'sins,' and was 'put to death in flesh,' now at the last living and reigning, in glory spiritual and divine, the Viceroy of the Universe. The mightiest of created beings—the hierarchy of angels, God's own messengers—through-

Ut in Baptismo signum est aqua: res autem ablutio animæ per sanguinem Christi, et carnis mortificatio. Horum utrumque sub se complectitur Christi institutum. Quod autem sæpe inefficax et absque fructu signum apparet, id fit hominum abusu, qui Sacramenti naturam non tollit. Discamus ergo rem signatam a signo non divellere. Quanquam simul a diverso vitio cavendum est, quale inter Papistas regnat. Quia enim inter rem et signum non distinguunt, ut oportet, consistunt in externo elemento, et illic locant salutis fiduciam. Itaque aquæ conspectus eorum mentes a Christi sanguine et gratia Spiritus abstrahit. Christum non cogitant bonorum omnium, quæ illic offeruntur, unicum esse authorem, gloriam mortis ejus ad aquam transferunt, arcanam Spiritus virtutem alligant visibili signo. Quid ergo agendum est? Ne separemus quæ a Domino conjuncta sunt. Debemus in Baptismo agnoscere spirituale lavacrum: debemus illic testimonium remissionis peccatorum et renovationis nostræ pignus amplecti; sic tamen relinquere et Christo et Spiritui Sancto suum honorem, ut nulla pars salutis ad signum transferatur.'

* This is the Greek order.—Sin.[1] omits *τοῦ* before *θεοῦ*.—The Vulgate addition, 'deglutiens mortem, ut vitæ æternæ hæredes efficeremur,' *(swallowing up death, that we might be made heirs of eternal life,)* is without authority, and probably came from the margin.

† *πορευθεὶς . . . ὑποταγέντων.* ‡ Ps. 110 : 1.

out all their ranks and provinces of authority and power, are '*made subject unto Him*,' who for a little while was 'made lower' than they.* Now they ever stand before Him, His willing, constant, flaming ministers. 'The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place.' It is no abatement to the ardor of their loyalty, and the alacrity of their service, that the Son of the Highest took not on Him the nature of their companions that fell, but became the Son of man —'bone of our bones and flesh of our flesh'—or that a human Form shall for ever fill the throne, around which they adore. Nay, it is the untiring burden of their song, that He who is their Lord, as He is ours, was once dead, and that He died for us. 'I beheld,' says John, 'and I heard the voice of many angels . . . and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice: Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.'†

* Heb. 2 : 7, 9. † Ps. 68 : 17; Gen. 2 : 23; Rev. 5 : 11, 12.

LECTURE XXIV.

1 PETER 4 : 1–6.

'FORASMUCH then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries: Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you: who shall give account to Him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead. For this cause was the Gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.'

THE Epistle here resumes its hortatory course, which is still made to start directly from the cross of Him who is now on the right hand of God.

'*Christ, then*'—the Lord of glory Himself—'*having suffered* for us*'†—for us sinners, for us as sinners—'*in the flesh;*' in other words, Christ having, for the sake of our redemption from sin, suffered even to the destruction of His natural life in the flesh, though with such a glorious final issue from all His sorrows, (ch. 3 : 18, 22;) '*do ye also arm yourselves‡ with the same mind*'—with the same mind, that is, as Christ, in regard to sin, and suffering for righteousness' sake, (ch. 3 : 17.) Ye too, like your Saviour, are called to a

* Χριστοῦ οὖν παθόντος;—Sin.[1] ἀποθανόντος.

† Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford, cancel the words ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν, after B, C, and the Vulgate. The Syriac and Sin.[1] read ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν, *(for you.)*

‡ καὶ ὑμεῖς . . . ὁπλίσασθε. This verb does not elsewhere occur in the New Testament.

warfare with sin, and in this holy strife ye too have already suffered in the flesh, and may yet have to resist to the ruin of all fleshly interests, yea, unto blood. Beware of going into battle in your own strength—in the strength of a merely human virtue. Take unto you the whole armor of God. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. That will be your best and sufficient defence against the assaults of temptation, and the fiery darts of hell—your strong consolation also in the hour of sorest trial. In entering into the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, you attain to far more than an external conformity to His death. Your true safeguard in the midst of all perils is in being identified with your Lord, and sharing, so far as is allowed to you, not merely His sufferings, but the very *thought—intent—mind*,* by which He was animated and sustained. This alone will suffice to secure the gracious result of affliction; '*for he that hath suffered in*† *the flesh hath ceased from sin*'—has been brought to an effectual pause‡ in the career of shame and death. This is true alike of all who in the Christian sense so suffer.§ When Christ Himself became obedient unto death, not only was sin the cause of all His woe; but He endured the cross in willing, conscious antagonism to sin. Made sin for us, He died unto sin once for all, and now and henceforth He is, in a far wider and more absolute sense than it could be affirmed of Him in the days of His flesh, without sin. The shedding of His blood, moreover, was for our ransom and cleansing. If this, therefore, was in His heart, when He suffered for us—died for all—then they, who being joined to the Lord are one spirit with Him, judge that all died in Him; and how shall they

* The larger sense of *ἔννοια*, (which occurs once again, and in the plural, at Heb. 4 : 12,) as=*mind, disposition, Gesinnung*, (Bretschneider, Meyer, Steiger, De Wette, Olshausen, Huther, Alford, etc,) is thought by Passow to be exemplified in Eur. *Hel.* 1026. Diod. 2. 30. Isocr. 112. d. Compare the Septuagint usage in Proverbs, for מְזִמָּה, (1 : 4; 3 : 21,) for בִּינָה, (4 : 1; 23 : 4,) etc.

† Wells, Lachmann, Alford, cancel *ἐν* (Sin.[1] A, C, G, and the Amiatine Vulgate.)—*ἐν σαρκί, in the flesh; σαρκί, as to the flesh*, (Winer.)

‡ Winer observes that *πέπαυται* may be understood passively; and it is so taken by Stolz, Jaspis, De Wette, Wiesinger, Alford, etc.

§ Erasmus, Semler, Jachmann, take *ὁ παθὼν ἐν σαρκί* as a designation of Christ.

that are dead to sin live any longer therein? For he that is dead is freed from sin. And accordingly every man, who suffers as Christ suffered, being crucified with Him, thereby shows that he too, in aim and effort, and in the law of his mind, has broken with sin. Nay, he rejoices in sufferings—he glories in tribulations—because, while thus filling up what is lacking of the afflictions of Christ, he is at the same time forwarding the work of his own perfecting, as well as that of the entire household of faith.*

Such, I need not say, is the tenor of a very large portion of Paul's teaching, and it may serve likewise to develop in a paraphrastic way the real meaning of a verse which has perplexed commentators. The true key to its interpretation is found, as I suppose, in the perfect accord of the Petrine with the Pauline theology, on the point especially of that union between Christ and His people, which begets at once sympathy of feeling, and a community of interest and experience, between the Head and the members of the one Body.†

The same principle of explanation is, of course, equally available for that other construction of the sentence, which many prefer, and which is to this effect: '*Christ, then, having suffered for us in the flesh, do ye also arm yourselves with the same thought*'—the same that Christ had, when He suffered; namely—'*that he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin.*'‡ But, as neither the context nor the Gospel history contains any intimation of this general proposition having been specially the thought of the suffering Saviour, we shall do well to retain the common arrangement.

Literally rendered, the second verse would read thus: '*So as no longer to live the remaining time in the flesh to the lusts*

* Heb. 12 : 4; 9 : 28 compared with 4 : 15; Eph. 6 : 13; Phil. 2 : 5; 3 : 10; 1 Cor. 6 : 17; 2 Cor. 5 : 14, (ἀπέθανεν . . . ἀπέθανον. Comp. 4 : 10,) 21; Rom. 5 : 3–5; ch. 6 throughout; 7 : 4, 23; Gal. 2 : 19, 20; 6 : 14; Col. 1 : 24; 2 : 20; 3 : 3, etc.

† See 1 Pet. 2 : 3, 4, 24; 3 : 16; 4 : 13; 5 : 14, etc.; and comp. pp. 288–9.

‡ Pagninus, Calvin, Beza, the Geneva Bible, Wiesinger, and many others. Burton (and Schirmer) would explain thus: '*Arm yourselves with this consideration:* that is, let this idea of Christ having died for us serve as your defence against the lusts of the flesh.' Others thus: '*Arm yourselves with this very thought*, namely, *that he that hath*, etc.' But this, as Pott rightly objects, would have required *ταύτην τὴν ἔννοιαν*.

of men, but to the will of God;' * and in this form it is better connected with the former half, than with the latter, of the verse preceding, so that it shall express the victory to be achieved by those to whom Peter was writing, when, in obedience to the previous direction, they should have thoroughly equipped themselves for the fight of faith. This connection, accordingly, is adopted by very many.†

Mark, then, the two governing rules of life that are here contrasted—'*the lusts of men*'—of men in the state of natural atheism‡—and '*the will of God*.' These are 'contrary the one to the other,' and no man can serve both.§ There was a time, indeed, when, as the Apostle again reminds his brethren, they too were the servants of sin—serving divers lusts and pleasures—fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind—the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life ‖—what he had called 'the former lusts in their ignorance,' (ch. 1 : 14.) But that time was past. They had now come under the sway of a new lordship, '*the will of God*,' to which must be consecrated whatever was yet left of the present life in the body—'*the remaining time*' of their sojourning (ch. 1 : 17) in this now to them alien world. The will of God —the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning them—was their sanctification, through whatever gracious, whatever painful, discipline of love; and in no other way could they coöperate with it, and so meet the requirements of their high calling, than by arming themselves with the mind of Christ, whereby He was enabled in the days of His flesh to do always the things that pleased the Father, in the continual fulfilment of all righteousness, and in the meek endurance of His Father's will.**

For the sake of confirming them in this new walk of god-

* *εἰς τὸ μηκέτι . . . τὸν ἐπίλοιπον ἐν σαρκὶ βιῶσαι χρόνον.* The adjective and the verb occur nowhere else in the New Testament.

† As by Cocceius, Hammond, Semler, Meyer, De Wette, Bloomfield, Trollope, Brown, Peile, Wiesinger, Alford, etc.; most of whom, with Griesbach and Knapp, also put the intervening clause, *ὅτι . . . ἁμαρτίας*, into a parenthesis.

‡ Eph. 2 : 12. § Gal. 5 : 17; Matt. 6 : 24.

‖ Rom. 6 : 20; Tit. 3 : 3; Eph. 2 : 3; 1 John 2 : 16.

** 1 Thess. 4 : 3; 5 : 18; John 8 : 29; Matt. 3 : 15.

liness, the writer appeals directly to their present sense of the ignominy of their former courses. What he asserts in the third verse is, not that '*the time past of* our *life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles*,' but that it *does* suffice. It is, even as to form, not the suggestion of a reasonable probability, but the statement of an actual and perfectly well understood fact. Even so, however, far less is expressed than is implied. A close translation of the whole verse might be this: '*For sufficient for us is the past time of life* to have wrought the will† of the Gentiles, having walked in lasciviousnesses*'—or *lascivious ways;* the plural representing the manifold varieties of heathen uncleanness—'*lusts, wine-debauches, revels, carouses, and unlawful idolatries.*'‡ These are '*the lusts of men*' spoken of before—excesses to which human nature, left to itself, is ever prone. Here they are called '*the will of the Gentiles*'—that in which the heathen love themselves to indulge, and desire all others to bear them company. Now, says Peter, we have had enough of all that; need I tell you how much more than enough, when every hour of the past that has been so spent we cannot think of without horror and the bitterest remorse? 'What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.'§ Having then already lost, and worse than lost, so much precious time in the service of sin, let us at least with earnestness redeem for the service of God all that remains.

* Ἀρκετὸς (occurs twice elsewhere, Matt. 6 : 34 and 10 : 25) γὰρ ἡμῖν (Sin.[1] ὑμῖν) ὁ παρεληλυθὼς χρόνος τοῦ βίου. The simple copula in the indicative is preferable also to such terms as, *it ought to suffice*, (Grotius, Diodati, Martin, Beausobre and L'Enfant, Steiger,) *let it suffice*, (Martini, Carpzov, De Wette, Bloomfield,) etc.—The words τοῦ βίου are bracketed by Hahn and cancelled by Wells, Steiger, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford, etc., after Sin. A, B, C, many cursive MSS., Syriac, Vulgate, etc.

† Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford read κατειργάσθαι, and, for θέλημα, they and others read βούλημα (Sin. A, B, C, etc.)

‡ πεπορευμένους (Sin.: πορευομένους) ἐν ἀσελγείαις, ἐπιθυμίαις, οἰνοφλυγίαις, (in the New Testament only here,) κώμοις, πότοις, καὶ ἀθεμίτοις (in the New Testament is found but once again, and in an address of Peter, Acts 10 : 28) εἰδωλολατρείαις.—As distinct from οἰνοφλυγίαις, πότοις (itself also ἅπαξ λεγόμενον in the New Testament) seems, from its connection here with κώμοις, as well as from the classical usage, to denote *social* drinking-bouts.

§ Rom. 6 : 21.

The way in which the Gentiles are here referred to has sometimes been adduced* in support of the theory of the Jewish origin of those addressed. But any show of plausibility there might otherwise be in this is at once neutralized by the mention of a manifold idolatry as the climax of the wickedness of their former life, that particular form of ungodliness having been, as is well known, the object of special abhorrence to the Jews of that age.† And then, independently of this, the evidence for the opposite view, to wit, that the readers of the Epistle were mainly of Gentile extraction, is sufficiently ample to justify us in believing that that designation is here used in opposition, not to their original nationality, but to their present position as the people of God, (ch. 2 : 9, 10.)‡

Nor yet is it necessary to suppose that all of those readers, any more than the writer who, according to the text followed by our English translators, identifies himself with them,§ had once been chargeable with all the crimes, and 'filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness,'‖ here specified. Probably the most that could be said, in respect to some at least of the grosser sins, was just what Paul said to the Christians of Corinth, after enumerating a long list of similar abominations : 'And such were some of you.'** But, without denying by any means the existence among the heathen of a comparative virtue, it is to be considered that the corrupt nature, out of which flow the foulest pollutions of society, is common to all unrenewed men, and that therefore, in point both of legal relation and spiritual faculty, the respectable moralist who knows not God stands in the same class with the more outrageous transgressor, and must fall under a like condemnation. On this principle we need have no difficulty in admitting the universal truth of Paul's address to still another Gentile church : 'And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins ; wherein in time past ye

*As by Hensler, Jachmann, Weiss. † Rom. 2 : 22. ‡ De Wette.

§ The *ἡμεῖν*, bracketed by Knapp, is cancelled by Wells, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford, with the approbation of De Wette and Wiesinger, on the authority of A, B, the Syriac and Vulgate versions, etc.

‖ James 1 : 21. ** 1 Cor. 6 : 11.

walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all'—Jews as well as Gentiles—'had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh.'*

In the fourth verse the Apostle adverts to the perplexity and irritation of the heathen at witnessing the change that had come over their late comrades in iniquity. '*Wherein they think* it *strange that ye run not with* them *to the same excess of riot.*' The true construction, however, is slightly different from what this might lead you to suppose. The first word, *wherein*, refers, not to the vices just mentioned,† but to the ground or occasion of the wonder, to wit, that reformation of life which is implied in the preceding context, and is again, by a sort of apposition, distinctly assumed in the remainder of the verse; as if it were said, '*whereof they think strange*'‡—or, at which fact, or state of affairs, they feel strange; the fact, namely—'*that* ye *run not with* them *into the same excess of riot*,' or *the same outpouring*, or, as many§ understand the word, *the same slough, mire, sink, of profligacy*,‖ as they, or as yourselves formerly.

The whole phrase vividly describes the rush of the multitude to do evil—that general working of all uncleanness with greediness, which is the unfailing characteristic of every community in which is no knowledge, and no fear, of the living and true God.** In the absence of all Divine and eternal sanctions, the restraints of conscience and shame oppose but a feeble and ineffectual barrier to the torrent of evil; and that

* Eph. 2 : 1–3.

† Doddridge: '*in respect to which* abominable course of life.' Macknight: 'on account of your former life.'

‡ ἐν ᾧ ξενίζονται. There are other explanations of ἐν ᾧ, but they are scarcely worth mention.

§ Moldenhawer, Macknight, Pott, Steiger, Bloomfield, Trollope, Brown, Huther, Alford, etc. Hesychius, φυρμόν.

‖ εἰς . . . τῆς ἀσωτίας ἀνάχυσιν. The last word does not occur elsewhere in the New Testament. For its meaning, the gloss of Suidas, βλακεία, ἔκλυσις=*slackness, looseness, softness*, has been followed by Gerhard, Schöttgen, Passow. For ἀσωτία, see Trench, *Synonyms of the N. T.*, § xvi.

** Ex. 23 : 2; Eph. 4 : 19; Gen. 20 : 11; Bengel: 'turmatim, avide.'

very social nature, which was meant for the shelter and encouragement of virtue, adds a fearful and almost irresistible momentum to the current.

Such was eminently the case in that dissolute age, when the saving grace of God appeared among men, 'teaching them that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, they should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.' * Those whose eyes were opened to discern the presence of the heavenly Stranger, and to sit as disciples at her feet, were soon missed from the altars of idolatry and the familiar haunts of sin ; and their old friends and neighbors marvelled, not knowing what to make of the change, or how to account for it. Many, we may be sure, were the coaxing solicitations, many the impatient remonstrances, many the contemptuous jeers, employed to break the spell of this sudden and mysterious arrest, and induce the laggards in the race to resume their places in the disordered crowd. To all there was but one answer, which may be given in the words of one of the earliest of the Fathers of the Church: 'There is,' said Clement of Alexandria, 'There is for us a limit, even the cross of our Lord.' † The reply, however, had nothing in it to satisfy the unbelieving, giddy multitude. It rather imbittered their scorn, and aroused their anger and the darkest suspicions. They '*spake evil of*' ‡ those whom they could not understand, and could no longer either persuade or coerce into a companionship in sin. They called them ungenial, proud, morose, despisers of the gods and the ancestral customs, practising in secret even fouler orgies than those from which they had publicly withdrawn.

'*Who shall render an account*,' § adds Peter sternly, '*to Him who is ready to judge the living* ‖ *and the dead*,' and who is none other than that same Lord Jesus Christ, for whose sake you thus suffer reproach. They had already been told (ch. 2 : 23) how He deported Himself under similar revilings.

* Tit. 2 : 11, 12. † Pædag. iii. 12 : *ὅρον ἔχομεν, τὸν σταυρὸν τοῦ Κυρίου.*
‡ For *βλασφημοῦντες*, Sin.[1] has *καὶ βλασφημοῦσιν.*
§ *ἀποδώσουσι λόγον*—as Heb. 13 : 17. ‖ *ζῶντας.*

He 'reviled not again . . . but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously.' And they knew also how gloriously His silent, uncomplaining faith was justified by the event. Raised from the dead, seated at the right hand of God, (ch. 3 : 21, 22,) He was now '*ready*,' every obstacle from earth and hell being taken out of the way—'*ready*' in His own Divine endowments and authority—'*ready*,' as soon as the time appointed of the Father should arrive *—to ascend in His turn the tribunal, as the Judge of all the earth—of the living and the dead—of His friends and His foes. Then shall the reproach of the former be wiped away, and the latter, who were ever ready enough to call them to a harsh account, (ch. 3 : 15,) shall themselves '*render an account*' of all their hard speeches and unjust judgments and cruel persecutions ;† and from the decisions of that day there shall be no appeal. 'Behold, the Judge standeth before the door.'‡

That the crucified and risen Saviour is 'ordained of God to be the judge of the living and the dead' is a fundamental truth of the Gospel, which, as Peter himself told Cornelius and his friends, Christ expressly commanded His Apostles to proclaim and testify to the people.§ It is, accordingly, very prominent both in their discourses and their writings ; and the universality of this judgment is everywhere attested or assumed. It is to embrace the two great divisions of mankind—those who shall then be found alive on the earth, and those also who shall then be in their graves.

With this last thought the sixth verse seems plainly to connect itself. '*For, for this cause*' ‖—or *to this end*—'*was the Gospel preached*** *also to the dead*,†† *that they might be judged,*

* John 5 : 22, 27 ; Acts 17 : 31. With ἑτοίμως ἔχοντι compare ἑτοιμήν of ch. 1 : 5, and see p. 50.

† Jude 15. ‡ James 5 : 9. § Acts 10 : 42.

‖ εἰς τοῦτο. The τοῦτο refers, not to v. 2, (Brown,) nor to judgment or the account spoken of in v. 5, (Burton, Trollope ; who then translate *εἰς with reference to,*) but to what follows in the present verse, ἵνα, (final ; not, as Rosenmüller, Wakefield, Burton, Bloomfield, Brown, etc. ecbatic,) κτλ.

** The common construction of εὐηγγελίσθη as here used impersonally is better than to supply ὁ Χριστός or τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, (Grotius, Bengel, Pott, Hottinger.)

†† νεκροῖς. To introduce a copula in the present tense, (as the English version,)

indeed, according to men in the flesh, but should live† according to God in the spirit.*'

Of this extremely difficult verse there has been perhaps a score of different interpretations. To attempt a detailed enumeration of these would be found more distracting and wearisome, than profitable for you. It is a case in which many, after the best efforts to determine the exact meaning, have still confessed themselves to be at a loss. What I shall offer will be rather in the way of suggestion, than of a confident decision.

The first point to be looked at is, Who are the dead, here spoken of, to whom the Gospel was preached?

And as to this I cannot but think that the connection, already pointed out, between the 5th and 6th verses is sufficient of itself to exclude the idea of the spiritually dead being meant in the latter instance—the dead in trespasses and sins—whether living before the incarnation, or since; a view, however, that has been taken by not a few both of the earlier and the later commentators.‡

Those, again, who find in ch. 3 : 19 a personal ministry of Christ in Hades, before or after His resurrection, naturally and generally§ refer to the same event this preaching of the Gospel to the dead—either restricting it to the disobedient of Noah's time,‖ or else extending it to all the dead.** But, as we could not adopt that explanation of the former passage, we, of course, can see no such reference in the one before us.

Then there are some†† who think the slanderers of the Christians are intended. These, though they may have died before Christ returns, shall not thereby escape His righteous judgment; nay, their condemnation will be the heavier, that to them also the Gospel was preached—preached with a gracious design—yet preached in vain.

or in the preterit, (Benson and Newcome, '*were* dead in sins,') is to give the particular view of the translator an undue advantage.

* ἵνα κριθῶσι μέν. Comp. ch. 3 : 18—p. 236, note †. † ζῶσι.

‡ Augustine, Bede, Gerhard, Benson, Whitby, Doddridge, Macknight, Brown, etc.

§ Bengel is an exception. ‖ De Wette.

** Huther, Alford, etc. †† Wiesinger cites Hofmann and Besser.

Nearly all of these opinions, you perceive, proceed on a principle that is capable of still other applications; the principle, namely, that by the dead here we are not required to understand absolutely all the dead who shall appear before Christ's judgment-seat. Such an understanding, on the contrary, is positively forbidden by the certain fact, that of those dead a vast proportion have never had the Gospel preached to them at all. Perhaps, even, a limitation of some sort is suggested by the omission in the original of the article before '*dead*'—as if it were *to dead persons, to some that are dead.* So that the question is reduced to this: What particular class of the dead had the writer in his mind, when he says that '*to them also was the Gospel preached, that they might be judged, indeed, according to men in the flesh, but should live according to God in the spirit*'?

Before inquiring, however, what other possible answer may be given to that question, it will be well to see what we are to make of that part of the verse, which states the purpose for which the Gospel was preached to some who had died before the Epistle was written.

And here also various notions have been started, with which we need not at all concern ourselves. What I would have you notice particularly is the strongly marked opposition between being '*judged according to men in the flesh*' and '*living according to God in the spirit.*' One can scarcely fail to be reminded of what was said of our Lord only a few verses back (ch. 3 : 18,) that He was 'put to death, indeed, in flesh, but quickened in spirit;' and the idea thus suggested for the explanation of the phrase before us is, I have no doubt, the true one. Not, certainly, as if the sufferings and death of men were any part of the purpose of God in sending them the Gospel; any more than when Paul thanked God that the Romans had been the servants of sin, but had become obedient to the faith,* he meant that the former fact also entered into the ground of his thanksgiving. His language is equivalent to this: 'God be thanked, that, though ye were the servants of sin, yet ye have obeyed, etc.' And so here: '*For to this end was the Gospel*

* Rom. 6 : 17.

preached also to the dead'—some dead—'*that, though judged, indeed, according to men*'—that is, in a human way, or as all men are judged—'*in the flesh, they should live according to God*'—that is, in a Divine way—'*in the spirit.*'

'It is appointed unto men once to die,' and their death, even that of believers, is properly called a judgment in the flesh; just as Paul, speaking of the chastisement, to death itself, inflicted on the Corinthians for their abuse of the Lord's Supper, calls that their being 'judged.'* And our own Apostle, in the 17th verse of this chapter, regards the trials of the children of God in these last times as truly a judgment concerning them—the very beginning of the final judgment. In all cases alike 'the body is dead because of sin,' for 'the wages of sin is death.' Nor does the redemption of Christ annul that necessity of our present fallen, fleshly condition. But it inaugurates a higher life—a life spiritual and Divine—which shall be perfected in the resurrection; and to this end is the Gospel preached in the world.

Now, as I am disposed to believe, the anticipation in the fifth verse of the general judgment of '*the living and the dead*' led the writer to think, in passing, of those in the latter throng to whom the Gospel had already been preached, and preached effectually for that very end, though their faith had not saved them from bodily death—in some instances, as those of Stephen and James, a violent and bloody death. But that Christians should die at all seems to have produced occasional perplexity and discouragement in the apostolic communion, glowing, as it was everywhere, with the hope of the Lord's speedy return in glory.† And now, at this advanced period of the apostolic age, when the fires of persecution were fast kindling around the Church,‡ it was all-important that her members should be reassured, that the gracious design of the Gospel had in no wise been defeated in the case of those of their number who had already fallen asleep. They still 'lived unto God,' and that life was continuous and indestructible, and would be consummated at the appearance of the Judge—of Him who is the Life of all His people, living or

* 1 Cor. 11 : 30–32. † See 1 Thess. 4 : 13, etc. ‡ Ch. 1 : 6, 7; 4 : 12.

dead,* as well as the Avenger of their wrongs. Such an assurance also, it is evident, was in beautiful harmony with the entire drift of this section of the Epistle, and indeed of the Epistle throughout.

Difficult as we have found some of these verses, the whole passage, you must be satisfied, is rich in the topics of Christian doctrine, warning, and consolation. Most of these, however, having been brought out distinctly in the course of the exposition, we need not now insist on them.

1. Let it never be forgotten by Christians, not only that they are called to a truceless and exterminating warfare with sin—with 'all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men'—at whatever sacrifice of fleshly interests, but that 'the mind of Christ' is the only armor that will avail in the hour of conflict.

2. Then, think not to reconcile in any dexterous way acquiescence in '*the lusts of men*' with subjection to '*the will of God*.'† Peter himself, I am sure, had not forgotten the terrible rebuke, in which 'the things that be of God' and 'those that be of men' were set in opposition, the one to the other.

3. Again, let us render due honor to the grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ, and, out of a world full of idols and of all iniquity, succeeded in immediately gathering around the cross 'a peculiar people, zealous of good works.'‡

4. The indirect operation of the same heavenly influences has since greatly changed the outward moral aspect of Christendom at large; and in that respect there may very often be to the unspiritual eye little or no difference between those who sincerely profess Christ, and those who do not profess Him at all. But, be assured, there is just as much need now as formerly of the Apostolic exhortation: 'Be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.'§ Have not those around us reason enough to '*think strange*,' not that we differ so much, but that,

* Luke 20 : 38; Col. 3 : 4. Note the present ζῶσι as opposed to the aorist κριθῶσι.

† Rom. 1 : 18. ‡ John 1 : 17; Tit. 2 : 14. § Rom. 12 : 2.

with such a faith and such a hope as ours, we differ so little, from them?

5. And finally, let the thought of the coming judgment—its certainty and its nearness—be much upon our mind. 'For we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ.' At that dread bar the enemies of Christ and of Christ's people shall receive their 'just recompense of reward;' all hypocrisies shall be unveiled; and only the living ones—they who, amidst the temptations of earth and the weaknesses of the flesh, still sought with good and honest hearts to serve the Lord and their brethren—shall be crowned with 'everlasting joy.'*

* Rom. 14 : 10; Heb. 2 : 2; Is. 35 : 10.

Lecture XXV.

1 *PETER* 4 : 7–11.

'But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer. And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. Use hospitality one to another without grudging. As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.'

The writer has been speaking at large of what concerned the position and duty of his brethren in the presence of, and in their relations to, an unholy and hostile world, (2 : 11 ; 4 : 6.) He may now be said to address himself more immediately to the regulation of their inner Church-life, though still with a constant eye to their afflictive outward circumstances. (4 : 7–5 : 9.)

'*But the end of all things is at hand*'*—the end, not merely of your temptations and sorrows, but of the whole present economy of human affairs, yea, of 'the heavens and the earth which are now.'† For the reference is not to the overthrow of Jerusalem,‡ except as that might be supposed to involve, or to be involved in, the general catastrophe. Still less is Peter thinking of the death of individuals. No doubt, when a man dies, that is to him an end of all earthly interests ; and this truth is a serious and solemn one. But it is not the truth

* ἤγγικε, *is come near*, (Luke 10 : 9, 11 ;) better than *draweth near*, (Luke 21 : 8.)
† 2 Pet. 3 : 7. ‡ Hammond, Benson, etc.

here expressed, nor can it be said that the consideration of individual mortality figures largely among the motives by which the New Testament enforces the duties of Christians.

Prominent among those motives, however, is the anticipation of the crisis, when Christ shall return to judgment. And everywhere that crisis is by the Apostles represented as near. It may even be admitted that, in their own private thoughts and surmises on the subject, they were inclined to hope that the consummation would arrive much sooner than God's purpose warranted them to expect. But what we are concerned with is their official teaching ; and their uniform language, in regard to the shortness of the time that should precede the Lord's second coming, is then justified by the similar phraseology employed by the Lord Himself on that topic—by the Divine estimate of duration—by the fact that, as related to previous dispensations, this was the last time, the time of urgent preparation for final judgment—and, lastly, by a comparison of the length of this additional term of gracious long-suffering, as that may be inferred from prophetic intimations, with the ages of the past, or with the glory that shall follow.

'The end he speaks of,' says Calvin, 'is not merely that of each several individual, but the entire renovation of the world ; as if he said, that Christ will shortly come, and put an end to all things. It is not strange, therefore, if we are overwhelmed by worldly cares, and held in slumber, or if the sight of present things dazzles our eyes ; because we do all commonly promise ourselves an eternity in this world ; never at least does the end come into mind. Whereas, did the trump of Christ sound in our ears, it would keenly smite all our senses, nor suffer them to lie thus torpid. It might be objected, however, that a long series of ages has elapsed since Peter wrote this, and still the end is not yet seen. I answer, that to us the time seems long for this reason, that we measure its length by the spaces of the present life, but that, could we have respect to the perpetuity of the life to come, many generations would be for us as it were a moment, (2 Pet. 3 : 8.) Moreover, it must be held as a first principle, that, ever since the ap-

pearing of Christ, there is nothing left to the faithful, but with wakeful minds to be always intent on His second advent.'*

This blessed hope, accordingly, is made, as I have said, the frequent ground of apostolic appeal; and sometimes, as here, the thought of its speedy realization is used as a motive to the cultivation of the very tempers and habits, to which it has been thought to be especially unfavorable. 'Let your moderation,' says Paul, 'be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.' And James: 'Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord is at hand.'† In the same spirit is our text: '*The end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer;*' or, '*be sound-minded, therefore*'‡—*discreet, prudent*—'*and be sober, in order to prayer.*'

The *sound mind*, that is here enjoined as peculiarly becoming those who 'see the day approaching,'§ is opposed to the manifold insanities and extravagances of the unrenewed nature; as when the poor Gadarene who had his dwelling among the tombs, redeemed at last from distraction and madness, and the fury of hellish tormentors, was found sitting calm and thoughtful, in the peace of God, at the feet of his

* 'Quanquam non de privato tantum cujusque fine loquitur, sed de universa mundi reparatione: acsi diceret, venturum brevi Christum qui finem omnibus imponet. Non mirum igitur si nos obruant mundi curæ, sopitosque teneant: si oculos perstringat præsentium rerum aspectus: quia omnes fere nobis æternitatem in mundo promittimus: saltem nunquam finis venit in mentem. Quod si auribus nostris insonaret Christi tuba, sensus omnes nostros acriter percelleret, neque ita torpere pateretur. Cæterum objici posset, longam ætatum seriem fluxisse ex quo hoc scripsit Petrus, necdum tamen finem conspici. Respondeo, nobis ideo longum videri tempus, quia longitudinem metimur caducæ hujusce vitæ spatiis; verum si in perpetuitatem futuræ vitæ respicere possemus, multa secula nobis instar momenti fore: quemadmodum et proxima epistola dicet. Præterea tenendum est illud principium, ex quo semel apparuit Christus, nihil fidelibus relictum esse, nisi ut suspensis animis semper ad secundum ejus adventum intenti essent.'—Comp. pp. 62–5; also *Lect. on Thess.* pp. 74–7 and 260–2.

† Phil. 4 : 5, 6; James 5 : 8, (ἤγγικε.)

‡ *σωφρονήσατε οὖν.* This verb, with its cognates, *σώφρων*, *σωφροσύνη*, etc., is scarcely susceptible of satisfactory translation. But the radical idea throughout is that suggested by the etymology, (*σῶς*, *φρήν.*)

§ Heb. 10 : 25.

Liberator.* It implies a discernment of the differences of things,† as of the comparative value of things present and things to come, and the choice of the more excellent. It may thus be said to include, in particular, the other duty prescribed, that of *sobriety*—the keeping of the mind and heart clear from the bewildering and benumbing fumes of worldly excess and dissipation of every kind. For, although very many retain the rendering, *watch*, yet, as one remarks, 'the sort of watching spoken of is not the opposite of sleep, but of drunkenness;' ‡ and in this sense is the word § always, with one exception, translated elsewhere in our English version.

Such, then, in the judgment of Apostles, is the mental disposition that best comports with the belief, that '*the end of all things is at hand;*' not a fanatical excitement and agitation, but a steady, intelligent, circumspect moderation in all things; and that '*in order to prayer*,' or literally, '*in order to the prayers*' ‖—the prayers of the Church, and of the Christian life generally. It is taken for granted that these abound in the closet of the believer, and wherever two or three are gathered together in the name of Christ; nay, that they constitute the great practical interest, the promotion of which should of right control the regulation of the heart, no less than of our external affairs. In view, especially, of present trials and of the coming end of all things, see that ye 'continue,' Peter seems to say, 'instant in prayer.'** That will be your best refuge from the violence of the wicked—your dearest solace under the bitterness of reproach; and, when the Lord shall come, where would you rather be found of Him, than on your bended knees before the mercy-seat? Be, therefore, sedulously on your guard against whatever

* *σωφρονέω* is the word used both in Mark 5 : 15 and Luke 8 : 35.

† *τὸ δοκιμάζειν τὰ διαφέροντα*, (Rom. 2 : 18; Phil. 1 : 10.)

‡ Rev. William Dow; *Sermons and Homilies*.

§ *νήφω*. See ch. 1 : 13; 5 : 8; 1 Thess. 5 : 6, 8. To these examples 2 Tim. 4 : 5 might better have been conformed. And so *νηφάλιος* [*-ἐος*] is in our version always *sober*, (1 Tim. 3 : 2, 11; Tit. 2 : 2.) Comp. pp. 63–9.—Sin.[1] omits *καί* before *νήψατε*.

‖ *εἰς τὰς προσευχάς*. See Acts 2 : 42; 1 Tim. 2 : 1; 5 : 5. Here the *τάς* is cancelled by Lachmann and Alford, after Sin. A, B, and several cursive MSS.

** Rom. 12 : 12.

would either interrupt the habit, or injure the spirit, of prayer. And, as nothing is more fatal to both than a mind disturbed and driven by folly, and destitute of the power of self-command, or giddy with the intoxication of the flesh and of the world, '*be sound-minded, therefore, and be sober, in order to prayer*'—*the prayers*, whether of a secret, social, or public kind.*

'*And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves;*' which might otherwise be rendered thus: '*But*' †—since there is no danger of excess in loving one another; or, since a man may easily strive after sober-mindedness, and neglect love ‡—'*but before*§ *all things have your love for one another intense.*' ‖ That they would love one another is here again assumed; what is enjoined is, that their love be vehement.**

And this was to be regarded as of paramount importance. Not, certainly, as if, in comparison with this, they might safely neglect all other things, as, for instance, what he had just been saying about sobriety and prayer. But, as the other graces and exercises of the Christian life tend to the increase of love, so in the atmosphere of love they themselves must live and move and have their being. The writer, however, has an immediate eye to the mutual duties of church members; and therefore he specifies brotherly love, not only as the essential element in the right performance of all these, but as itself exerting a direct and mighty influence in securing the purity, peace, and prosperity of the household of faith: '*for love,*' says he, '*shall cover*'—hide, put out of sight, suppress in darkness and oblivion—'*a multitude of sins.*' ††

* *νήψατε* being understood as above, there is no reason why *εἰς τὰς προσ.* should not be connected with both the preceding verbs. Tyndale's version is: 'Be ye therefore discreet and sober, that ye may be apt to prayers.' Comp. p. 198.

† *δέ*—cancelled by Alford, (Sin.) Comp. p. 224, note *.

‡ Steiger. § *πρό.*

‖ *τὴν εἰς ἑαυτοὺς ἀγάπην ἐκτενῆ* (comp. *ἐκτενῶς*, p. 165) *ἔχοντες.* Vs. 8–11 may be regarded as grammatically dependent on v. 7. Comp. p. 160, note *.

** Bengel: 'Amor jam præsupponitur: ut sit vehemens, præcipitur.' The above construction is adopted also by Hensler, Greenfield, Bloomfield, Peile, De Wette, Huther, Wiesinger, Alford.

†† *πλῆθος ἁμαρτιῶν*—as James 5 : 20.—Sin omits *ἡ* before *ἀγάπη.*

But whose sins? the sins of him who loves, or of him who is loved?

Of the former, say most Roman Catholic divines, in their zeal to establish the doctrine of human merit; and also not a few Protestant interpreters, on the principle recognized even in the Lord's Prayer, that God's forgiveness of our trespasses is according to our forgiveness of those who trespass against us. As 'he shall have judgment without mercy that hath showed no mercy,' so to a life of active beneficence to the disciples of Christ, as such, is pledged by the Judge Himself the blessedness of the future and everlasting kingdom.*

Others have supposed, that the many sins which love shall cover are those of the party beloved, and led by love to repentance, and so within the circle of God's covenanted mercy. This is, indeed, plainly the meaning of the phrase as used by James, (5 : 19, 20 :) 'Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.' But our present passage differs from that, in that Peter seems to be thinking of the operation of love, not so much in the conversion of sinners, as in the mutual intercourse of believers.

Both writers, however, borrowed the expression, though in a modified form, and, it may be, with varied applications of it, from Prov. 10 : 12 : 'Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins.' Instead of finding its pleasure in searching out, and exposing to view, every fault and infirmity of a brother, its tendency and habit rather is, so far as its obligations in other relations, and the good of the offender himself, will allow,† to avert its own eyes from every thing of the sort, and conceal it from the notice of others. Least of all does it retain any implacable grudges, but forgives 'until seventy times seven.' ‡ Now, very many§ believe that this is just what is meant also in the verse before us. In the present state of imperfection it must needs be that offences come

* Matt. 6 : 14; 18 : 35; 25 : 34–40; Mark 11 : 25; 2 Tim. 1 : 16–18; James 2 : 13, etc.

† Lev. 19 : 17; Matt. 18 : 15–17, etc.

‡ Matt. 18 : 22.

§ As Luther, Calvin, Steiger, Wiesinger, etc.

even within the bosom of the Church; and, if the spirit of love be faint and ready to die, every such occasion will become a root of bitterness, which springing up will trouble and defile many.* Love, on the contrary, 'bearing all things, believing all things, hoping all things, enduring all things,' quenches each fiery spark as it falls, before it kindles into a conflagration. Or we may call it the healing power of the Body of Christ.

This view, it deserves to be remarked, is favored by the substitution, which is made by some of the best authorities, of the present tense for the future: *for love covers a multitude of sins;* it does so now—it is its business and delight to do so.† Our translators may even have intended to suggest it in connection with the common reading, when they entered on the margin the unusual variation of *will* for *shall: for love will cover a multitude of sins;* that is its natural bent—it will be always doing so. If, however, the future tense be retained, I should be inclined to think, that, while what has just been mentioned gives the real form of the original passage in Proverbs, this Old Testament saying, like so many others, acquires in the New an analogous, but deeper, significance. Our Apostle might then be thought, like James, to have had the clear and earnest eye of his primitive faith turned to the process and issues of the impending judgment, (vs. 5, 7, 17,) when it would be found that the spirit and labors and sacrifices of love had been mainly instrumental in the edification of the Church,‡ as well as in securing for itself the rewards of grace. Taken in this light, the words, *shall cover a multitude of sins*, are not simply an announcement of a yet future event, but an authoritative pledge on the part of God.

The next two verses point out certain forms, in which the mutual love of the brethren was to evince both its existence and its intensity.

* Heb. 12 : 15.

† *καλύπτει* (A, B, J, cursive MSS., Syriac, Vulgate, etc.) is marked by Griesbach as of great value, and adopted by Wells, Knapp, Meyer, Steiger, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Huther, Wiesinger, Alford.

‡ Gal. 5 : 13; 6 : 1; Eph. 4 : 15, 16, etc.

'Be *hospitable to one another* without murmurings.*' It is interesting to note the frequency with which stress is laid in the New Testament on this duty of hospitality. A principal reason of this, no doubt, was the peculiar adversity of the times, when it often happened that, the old bonds of family and society being sundered, or a general persecution arising because of the word, private Christians found themselves, like their leaders, without any 'certain dwelling-place—literally, and in every sense, 'scattered sojourners.' † Even when their business occasions merely took them temporarily from home, they must have shrunk from the contamination of the heathen inns along the road, as much as from the insult and outrage they might meet with there. Hence an important qualification of the primitive bishop or overseer, as of other church officers, was, that he should be 'a lover of hospitality' ‡—ready, for Christ's sake, to receive and shelter and comfort the friendless wanderers. But the obligation was not confined to those in office. To 'distribute to the necessity of saints'—to be 'given to hospitality'—is enjoined as the common duty of all—a duty resulting immediately from their Christian brotherhood. 'Let brotherly love continue,' says the writer to the Hebrews; and then: 'Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.' Nay, Christ had given His followers to understand, that sometimes He Himself, in the person of a disciple, would appear in their streets, and stand at their doors, 'a stranger,' as in the days of His flesh, 'having not where to lay His head.' Would it not be their privilege, even far more than it would be their duty, to 'take Him in'? §

Do this, then, '*without murmurings.*‖ Grudge not, make no complaint of the trouble or expense. What have you,

* *φιλόξενοι εἰς ἀλλήλους.* I should supply *ὄντες.* See p. 278, note ‖.

† 1 Cor. 4 : 11; 1 Pet. 1 : 1.

‡ 1 Tim. 3 : 2; 5 : 10; Tit. 1 : 8.

§ Rom. 12 : 13; Heb. 13 : 1, 2; Matt. 8 : 20; 25 : 35.

‖ *γογγυσμῶν.* The reading *γογγυσμοῦ (murmuring;* Sin. A, B, cursive MSS., Syriac, Vulgate, etc.) is favored by Griesbach and Bloomfield, and adopted by Wells, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Huther, Wiesinger, Alford. The word is rendered as above by our English versions at Phil. 2 : 14 and elsewhere. And similarly the cognates, *γογγύζω* and *γογγυστής.*

that you have not received? And is it not one main end for which it is given to you, that you may be helpful to your brethren? Remember also that for every cup of cold water, given to a disciple in the name of a disciple, there is a great reward.*

Another way in which brotherly love was to be shown, was in the use of those spiritual gifts with which believers in that age were ordinarily endowed at the time of their baptism, or through the subsequent laying on of Apostles' hands.†

'*According as each*' then '*received*,' not *the gift*, but '*a gift*' —for 'there are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit' (1 Cor. 12 : 4)—'*minister the same to one another*'‡—use, that is, every man his own particular gift for the common benefit—'*as good stewards of the manifold grace of God*,' and as having therefore gifts differing according to the grace given. §

This must not be restricted to the exercise of official gifts. The writer is addressing the whole body of the faithful, and he supposes that each one had a gift of some kind or other. The rule applies even to natural endowments, which are, indeed, the gifts of God at the first, and become doubly His gifts, when quickened and sanctified by the breath of the new life. Whatever, in fact, a man has of faculty for doing good, and edifying the Church, that may properly be called his gift; though in apostolic phraseology the name especially designates the extraordinary influences of the Holy Spirit, in which also the baptized generally shared.

Now, the consideration that Peter here urges is, that all these gifts of every kind were bestowed, not for the honor

* Matt. 10 : 42.

† The latter seems to have been the regular medium for the communication of the pentecostal gifts, (Acts 2 : 28; 8 : 18–20; 19 : 5, 6; Eph. 1 : 13; 1 Tim. 4 : 14, comp. 2 Tim. 1 : 6.) The recorded exceptions are the original effusion of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, (Acts 2 : 3, 4,) and what took place in like manner at the first calling of the Gentiles into the Church, (Acts 10 : 44–46, comp. 11 : 15, 17,) and in the case of the Apostle of the Gentiles, (Acts 9 : 17.)

‡ ἕκαστος καθὼς ἔλαβε (comp. *Revision of* 1 *John* 2 : 27, notes q and w) χάρισμα, εἰς ἑαυτοὺς αὐτὸ διακονοῦντες. For the construction, see p. 278, note ‖.

§ Rom. 12 : 6.

and gratification and separate profiting of the individual, but for the blessing of all, and must therefore be used for that end, instead of being either rendered unfruitful through neglect, or perverted to the purposes of a selfish ostentation. '*Of the manifold grace of God*,' as displayed in this variety of gifts—'*grace*,' one in its source and in its design, but, like the Divine wisdom, '*manifold*,' variegated, many-colored (so the word* is) in its modes of self-manifestation—of this grace the believers were not merely the objects and the depositaries, but '*stewards*.' Themselves nourished at the table of the great Householder, they were also in a measure made mutually dependent. Every man had his appropriate and appointed place of serving God, while at the same time serving his brethren, and had likewise his special gift for his special work. They were not to encroach on each other's spheres, nor covet or affect each other's gifts;† but, '*according as each received a gift, minister the same to one another, as good*'—kind, bountiful, faithful—'*stewards of the manifold grace of God*.' Only thus could 'the whole body,' to use Paul's noble figure, 'fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, make increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.' ‡

And now, lastly, the reference just made to the common relation, which all sustained to God, leads the writer to admonish his brethren, that, if they would attain these ends of love in their mutual service, they must maintain a constant sense of absolute dependence on God, and accountability to Him, in the exercise of their various gifts.

'*If any one speaketh*'—whether in the way of prophesying, or teaching, or exhorting; whether his be the word of wisdom or of knowledge; whether speaking with tongues, or the interpretation of tongues §—'let it be *as the oracles of God*,' ‖

* ποικίλος—in Eph. 3 : 10, πολυποίκιλος.

† Bengel: 'αὐτὸ, *id ipsum*—non affectato alio.'

‡ Eph. 4 : 16.

§ Comp. Rom. 12 : 6–8 and 1 Cor. 12 : 8, 10.

‖ εἴ τις λαλεῖ, ὡς λόγια Θεοῦ. Almost all expositors, down to Huther, supply λαλείτω [ἃ λαλεῖ] . . . διακονείτω. But the analogy of v. 10 would suggest rather a continuance of the participial construction.

that is, as one speaking the oracles of God;* with the humility, fidelity, and reverence, becoming the man who is called to handle the Divine word, or through whom God even more directly utters His messages to His children. Let him beware of giving God's oracles as if they were his own, or of adulterating them with what is his own. And let even his outward manner in conveying them to others express his own sense of their solemnity and importance.

And '*if any one ministereth*,' performs any other kind of service in the Church, whether in the way of giving, or ruling, or showing mercy; whether his province be that of miracles, or gifts of healing, or helps, or governments †—'let it be *as of the ability which God supplieth*,' ‡ that is, in the full and declared consciousness, that of himself he can do nothing effectual in work so holy, and that, if he is indeed able in any wise to promote the Church's well-being, his sufficiency is of God. Let him remember that he is but a minister—a servant of God and his brethren—and that, as his right to serve, so also his power is given him from above.

'*That in all*,' it is then beautifully added—'*in all*' of you, as His true instruments, § or, as it is more commonly and better understood, '*in all*' these gifts and offices of loving helpfulness—'*God*,' to whom the whole Church belongs, who has organized her, and furnished her with ministries and ordinances, according to His own will, and whose grace alone, stirring in all her members, qualifies them to benefit and bless each other—'*that in all God may be glorified through Jesus Christ*.' ‖ The glory of God, or the shining forth of His nature and attributes, is necessarily His own chief end in all His works of creation and providence. It is so especially in the wondrous constitution of the Church, and must therefore be her chief end also in all the service that she renders to

* Erroneously Barnes: 'As the oracles of God speak.' In both clauses ὡς marks the subjective feeling of the speaker and the minister.

† Comp. Rome 12 : 8 and 1 Cor. 12 : 28.

‡ εἴ τις διακονεῖ, ὡς ἐξ ἰσχύος ἧς χορηγεῖ ὁ Θέος. See p. 283, note ‖.

§ So De Wette. Calvin also allows this. Quite wrong is Rosenmüller: '*per omnes homines*, qui nempe vestros actus vident:' '*by all men*, to wit, spectators.

‖ ἵνα ἐν πᾶσι κτλ.

His name. And as God's love to her flows ever in the channel of Christ's mediation, and Christ's presence with her by His word and Spirit is the sole cause of her life and activity, so likewise it is '*through Jesus Christ*' that her answering tribute of praise reaches the eternal throne.*

Brought thus face to face with the grand final issue, the Apostle pauses, and, as if he overheard the never-ceasing doxology of the new creation, he looks up, and adds his fervent Amen: '*To whom*,' that is, to God, rather than, as some† explain, to Jesus Christ—'*To whom*'—not *be praise*, but, in sure fulfilment of the very purpose just mentioned—'*is the glory*,' the glory of redemption—'*and the power*,' by which it is effected. Both belong to God, and to Him they are ascribed in the songs of the Church '*for ever and ever*,' or, according to the old Hebrew formula of the original, *unto the ages of the ages.*‡ '*Amen.*'

* Comp. pp. 112–13. † Grotius, Steiger, etc.

‡ *ᾧ ἐστιν ἡ δόξα καὶ τὸ κράτος εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων.* Comp. Matt. 6 : 13, and the *Revision of Rev.* 1 : 6.

Lecture XXVI.

1 *Peter* 4 : 12–19.

'Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part He is evil spoken of, but on your part He is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil-doer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf. For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.'

The 11th verse had closed with a doxology; and it is not till the beginning of the next chapter that the writer returns to the work of instructing his brethren, in view of the approaching end of all things, as to their mutual obligations as members of the Church. Meanwhile, taking advantage of the solemn pause in the discourse, but bearing distinctly in mind the same great crisis, he pours forth still another strain of tender, earnest admonition and consolation in regard to the sorrows and perils by which they were beset. If there is repetition here, it is like that of maternal love, when soothing the pains, and wiping away the tears, of children. We shall find, however, that the sources of strength and comfort for the suffering saints, that are now to be opened, are deeper and more various than had yet been adverted to.

From the language of our version you might easily suppose

that '*the fiery trial*' was not then thought of as something actually present, but apprehended merely as near at hand; though it may be that our translators intended by the phrase, '*which is to try you*,' to express, not the certain futurity of the trial,* but its special character and design.† The latter, at all events, is what Peter meant. His words, closely rendered, are: '*Beloved, think not strange of the burning among you*'—(part of that great conflagration which Christ came to kindle in the earth ‡)—'*occurring to you for a trial, as if a strange thing were happening unto you.*' § Indeed, the whole Epistle shows, by its ever-recurring refrain of condolence, that the trial had at least already begun.

And the temptation was not slight to '*think strange*' of it. Here were the children of God left apparently defenceless to the rage of His enemies and theirs; the loyal adherents of the Saviour, whose blood had flowed for their ransom, and to whom now belonged all power in heaven and on earth, subjected still to the same sort of injurious treatment to which He Himself had voluntarily submitted, while yet a Man of sorrows. Long enough surely had it been the lot of the righteous, during the morning twilight of the kingdom of God, to be 'destitute, afflicted, tormented.' ‖ Must that continue to be their lot, after the redemption had been accomplished, and while the Sun of righteousness was shining on high? Or, if the 'called and chosen and faithful' are not to be exempted in this present life from the common ills of humanity, why must they be plagued more than other men, and to all ordinary judgment be 'of all men most miserable'? ** Might not this be reckoned truly 'a strange *thing*'?—something that was '*happening*,' if not against the will of their

* Barnes: 'which was then impending;' Brown: '*which is coming*.'

† So the older English versions. Tyndale and the Geneva: 'which now is come among you to try [prove] you;' Cranmer and the Bishops': 'which thing is to try you.'

‡ Luke 12 : 49.

§ Ἀγαπητοί, *μὴ ξενίζεσθε* (p. 582, note 1) *τῇ ἐν ὑμῖν πυρώσει* (Rev. 18 : 9, 18—the only other instances) *πρὸς πειρασμὸν ὑμῖν γινομένῃ, ὡς ξένου ὑμῖν συμβαίνοντος.*

‖ Heb. 11 : 37.

** Rev. 17 : 14; Ps. 73 : 5; 1 Cor. 15 : 19.

sovereign Lord, yet, so to speak, fortuitously,* and without His notice? And shall they not venture, from the depth of their sorrow and danger, to send the chiding appeal even to the right hand of God: 'Master, carest Thou not that we perish?' †

Let us see how the Apostle deals with the difficulty.

1. He first affectionately counsels them to dismiss all such doubts and misgivings, since what they were enduring, or might yet have to endure, came not at all by chance, but by a Divine appointment, and for a gracious end—not for their destruction, but, as was formerly (ch. 1 : 7) explained, '*for trial*,' the trial of their faith. ‡ The fires of suffering were to test and demonstrate the genuineness of their Christian character, and at the same time to refine and strengthen it. This one assurance might well reconcile them to the severity of the dispensation.

2. But a feeling of bare acquiescence and resignation was not all that might fairly be expected of them. In suffering for Christ, they suffered with Him—'*shared in the sufferings of Christ*' § Himself. Excepting in so far as they were not called to drink the bitterness of the curse, and to encounter the sting of death and the power of God, their sufferings were the same in kind as His—whatever the world's scorn and violence could inflict. Like His, also, they had their origin in the world's hatred both of the truth to which the friends of Christ bore witness, and of their holiness of character and life. On these accounts, as well as on the strength of the vital bond existing between the Head and the members, they were entitled to feel that they were one with the suffering Saviour, even as He too resented their sufferings as the continuation of His own. ‖

* Bengel: 'temere.'

† Mark 4 : 38.

‡ Bengel: 'nonnisi *ad tentationem* . . . consilio divino.'

§ *κοινωνεῖτε τοῖς τοῦ Χριστοῦ παθήμασι.*

‖ Acts 9 : 4, 5; 2 Cor. 1 : 5; 4 : 10; Phil. 3 : 10; Col. 1 : 24 (not merely, as Wahl, Robinson, *s. v. ὑστέρημα*, and others, *afflictions for Christ;*) Heb. 13 : 13. Comp. pp. 260–2.

Now, if the courtiers of earthly monarchs have sometimes been forward to follow them into exile and poverty, who would not aspire to be the companion and the sharer of the sorrows of the Son of God? Shall any that know Him, who He is, and what He is to us, shrink even from the summons, 'Let us also go, that we may die with Him'?* Nay, says Peter, '*rejoice;*' and that not merely *because* '*ye share in the sufferings of Christ,*' but '*according as*' ye so share.† Let the measure of your sufferings be the measure of your joy.

3. It would then, he goes on to intimate in the next place, be the measure also of their reward. That reward was to be the crown, not so much of their sufferings, as of the patience and joy of faith with which the sufferings were borne. '*But, according as ye share in the sufferings of Christ, rejoice; that at the revelation also of His glory ye may rejoice, exulting.*'‡ Every thing in Christ and His history—His humiliation and His glory alike—goes to swell the joy of His people. And between their joy, while partaking of the humiliation, and their share of the future glory, there is a connection of the closest kind, the former being not merely a foretaste of, but a preparation for, the latter. 'By joy and desire,' says Bengel—or, as he might have said, by suffering and joy—'we attain to joy and exultation.'§ If now there is joy in suffering—in being crucified with Christ—how great shall be the joy of being glorified together! Now, being in heaviness through manifold temptations, (ch. 1 : 6,) His followers rejoice, weeping; then, freed for ever from sin, and sorrow, and care, they shall '*rejoice, exulting.*' There will be no abatement and no weariness in the rapture of eternity.

4. But again looking merely at their present condition, in

* John 11 : 16.

† καθό [Beza and the Elzevir, καθώς]—found also in Rom. 8 : 26 and 2 Cor. 8 : 12.

‡ ἵνα καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀποκαλύψει (as at ch. 1 : 7. Comp. *Lectures on Thessalonians*, p. 437) τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ χαρῆτε ἀγαλλιώμενοι, (see p. 32, note *.)

§ 'Gaudio desiderioque assequimur gaudium et exultationem. Conf. *ἵνα ut* Joh. 8, 56. Spectatur præmium patientiæ lætæ.' John 8 : 56, however, is not parallel. But the ἵνα of our text is not ecbatic, (Gerhard, Pott, Hensler, etc.)

which, as we have already seen,* calumnious reproach formed as yet a principal instrument of their trial, Peter's anointed eye discerns even there a gleam of that coming glory, and once more he pronounces them blessed. '*If ye are*'—as I know ye are—'*reproached for the name of Christ*'—as confessing, and yourselves bearing, that worthy name—'*blessed* are ye;† *for*'—all other considerations apart—'*the Spirit of glory*'—or, as some read, *of glory and power*‡—'*even the* Spirit *of God, resteth upon you.*'§

'*The Spirit of God*' may be called '*the Spirit of glory*,' for the same reason that God Himself is 'the Father of glory,' and our Saviour Jesus Christ is 'the Lord of glory'—to wit, as being possessed of Divine excellence.‖ But there is here a special propriety in the use of the phrase to designate the glorious Person, by whom, in contrast with the present outward humiliation of the Church, she is sealed unto the day of redemption—who is Himself the first fruit of her inheritance—and whose gracious office it is to form her in meekness for that inheritance, by fashioning her after the

* Comp. pp. 132–3, and 226, note †.

† εἰ ὀνειδίζεσθε (comp. p. 165, note ‡) . . . μακάριοι, (comp. 222, note ‡).—ἐν before ὀνόματι is omitted by Sin.[1]

‡ The words καὶ δυνάμεως being added after δόξης by Pott, Hensler, Scholz, Steiger, Lachmann, on the authority of A, B, several cursive MSS., Vulgate, etc. Griesbach has been named (by Jachmann, De Wette, and Brown) as favoring this reading; but he dropped it in his second edition. The addition in Sin.[1] is: καὶ τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ.

§ τὸ τῆς δόξης καὶ τὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ Πνεῦμα have been variously construed. 1. The words τὸ τῆς δόξης are taken by themselves, as = ἡ δόξα, by the Clementine Vulgate, Tertullian, (*Scorp.* 12,) Erasmus, Vatablus, Cranmer, Hammond, (*the state of glory,*) and latterly by Huther. But this, while it looks like a shift to evade the grammatical difficulty of the double τό, also yields an unsuitable sense. The suffering believer, even though he receive a larger measure of the Spirit, is not yet glorified. For τὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ Πνεῦμα can scarcely be considered exegetical of τὸ τῆς δόξης (Huther) thus understood. 2. Bengel thinks there may be here a hendiadys: *glory and God=God of glory;* or else that ἡ δόξα is used as a designation of Christ. But there is little likelihood in either of these suggestions, though the latter is imitated by Augusti, (who would supply Κυρίου after δόξης: *Eures glorreichen Herrn,*) and apparently adopted by Meyer, (*des Glorwürdigen.*) 3. The construction followed above, which makes καὶ τὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ exegetical of τὸ τῆς δόξης Πνεῦμα, is that most generally approved.

‖ Eph. 1 : 17; 1 Cor. 2 : 8. Comp. Ps. 24 : 7; Acts 7 : 2; James 2 : 1, etc.

likeness of her Lord's glory.* He, to whom is committed so great a work, can indeed be none other, as the Apostle teaches us, than '*The Spirit of God.*' And, as He ever delights in bearing witness to Christ in the souls of men, so when a soul, strengthened by His might, welcomes, for Christ's sake, the hostility and reproaches of this world, there '*the Spirit of glory, even the* Spirit *of God*,' especially loves to take up His abode. Resisted and repelled by the multitude of the unbelievers, and but languidly recognized, if at all, by the formal and careless professor, He finds at last His most cherished rest in the humble martyrs of truth and righteousness. Over them He lovingly broods, as when, in fulfilment of ancient prophecy, the Heavenly Dove 'descended and remained' on the newly-baptized Redeemer.† And so each feeble, suffering saint becomes a Shechinah of the Divine presence.

The rest of the 14th verse, '*On their part, indeed,*‡ *He is evil spoken of*'—or *blasphemed* §—'but on *your part He is glorified*,' is not found in some of the oldest authorities, and is, accordingly, omitted by some of the modern editors of the Greek Testament.‖ Were we to judge, however, merely by the internal evidence, there need be no doubt at all about the genuineness of the clause. Taking it as we find it, I understand it as referring, not, as some explain, to Christ,** or the name of Christ,†† but to '*the Spirit of glory and of God*,' and as, in fact, vindicating against a possible objection what had

* Rom. 8 : 23; 2 Cor. 1 : 22; 5 : 5; Eph. 1 : 13; 4 : 30; Phil. 3 : 21; Col. 1 : 12.

† John 1 : 33. Comp. Is. 11 : 2, where the Septuagint has the same verb, *ἀναπαύομαι*.

‡ *μέν*. Comp. pp. 238 and 269.

§ *βλασφημεῖται*.

‖ It is thought by Mill to have been a gloss—is marked as doubtful by Steiger—and rejected by Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford, on the authority of Sin. A, B, many cursive MSS., the Syriac and Vulgate versions, (but not the *Codex Amiatinus*,) Tertullian, etc.

** So Diodati, Whitby, Wells, Bengel, Macknight.

†† So Burton and Jachmann—regarding the previous clause, *ὅτι—ἀναπαύεται*, as parenthetical.—Most objectionable of all is the construction by Piscator and Brown of both verbs, *βλασφημεῖται* and *δοξάζεται*, as used impersonally. Brown: 'with regard to them there is reproach, but with regard to you there is glory.'

just been asserted respecting the intimacy of the relation which so great a Being sustained to the calumniated Church. As if it were said: True, your enemies are all unconscious, at least they stand in no awe, of His presence; as when the blinded Sodomites 'wearied themselves to find the door,' behind which stood the angelic terror; or as when Pharaoh and his host, regardless, in their hot pursuit of their redeemed bondmen, of the protecting cloud in which dwelt Israel's God, rushed on the ruin prepared for them; or as when the princes of this world crucified, without knowing, the Lord of glory; or as the mockers on the day of Pentecost ascribed to new wine the inspirations of this same Spirit.* Just such a madness is it, that now possesses your slanderers. The very thing that they hate in you is the fruit of the Spirit's operations; and thus the reproaches wherewith they reproach you fall on Him. '*On their part, indeed*'—so far as they are concerned—'*He is blasphemed, but*'—what of that? It is none the less true that—'*on your part He is glorified*'—glorified by your adoring recognition of Him as your Divine Comforter and Guide—by your faithful testimony to the truth He has taught you—by your steady growth in all that is good—by your patience under insult and wrong.

And this suggests a renewal of the caution which had been repeatedly given before.† They must be ever careful that the reproaches of their heathen neighbors were not provoked by their own misdoings. All that had been said of the blessedness of suffering, of their partnership with Christ in suffering and in glory, and of the present compensations of the Spirit, was conditioned on their life being such as became the Gospel they professed. I speak, says Peter, of reproaches for the name of Christ, and in the bearing of which the presiding, overshadowing spirit of the Church is glorified; '*for*' ‡—not *but*—'*let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or*

* Gen. 19 : 11; Ex. 14 : 5, etc.; 1 Cor. 2 : 8; Acts 2 : 13.

† See ch. 2 : 12, 15, 16, 19, 20; 3 : 14, 16, 17.

‡ γάρ. The adversative interpretation, which comes from the Vulgate *autem*, (the Amiatine, however, has *enim*,) is quite arbitrary; and equally so is the sense *modo, nur, only*, (Syriac, Augusti, Jaspir,) or *therefore*, (Grotius, Benson's note, Macknight, Rosenmüller.) See p. 382, note †.

an evil-doer,' in any other like flagrant sense, '*or as*'—even as ; the *as* being here at last repeated to mark a distinct class of offences,* and one into which they were more liable to fall than into those open outrages on even human law—'*a busy-body in other men's matters.*'

The whole of this phrase stands for a single Greek word,† that occurs nowhere else, and which, according to its etymology, denotes one who undertakes to oversee what belongs to others—'as it were, plays the bishop in another's diocese.' ‡ Hence it is sometimes explained as meaning one who usurps official authority over others.§ But our translators, following the older English versions, did well to avoid this unnecessary restriction. Peter's word, which might be rendered generally *an intermeddler*, would include all that Paul intended when he censured the 'busybodies' of Thessalonica, and exhorted all to 'study to be quiet, and to do their own business.' ‖ The nature of the present context, however, makes it probable that our Apostle wished especially to save his brethren from the trouble that might come to them from any indiscreet, over-zealous interference with heathen manners and customs.**

'*But if as a Christian*' ††—Peter hastens to reiterate—that is, if any man suffers for merely bearing that name of most honorable distinction that came to us from Antioch, or for aught that really belongs to the Christian calling—'*let him not be ashamed, but*'—so far from that—'*let him glorify God on this behalf,*' or *in this particular,*‡‡ or, as some read, *in this name.*§§ Let him account it to be, what it truly is, a badge

* Bengel, Huther, Wiesinger.

† *ἀλλοτριοεπίσκοπος* (Lachmann, after Sin. B, *ἀλλοτριεπίσκοπος*. See Suicer, *Thes. s. v.)* is here neglected by the Syriac. Augusti's definition, *disturber of the public peace* (Meyer *Unruhstifter)* has but a remote connection with the etymology. And the same objection lies against the Vulgate *alienorum appetitor, coveter of what belongs to others*, (the sense also of Calvin, Castalio, Beza, Estius, Horneius.)

‡ Howe, Leigh. Diodati : *facendo'l Vescovo sopra gli stranieri.*

§ Luther, *(der in ein fremdes Amt greifet,)* Hammond, Clericus, Lardner, Benson, etc.

‖ 1 Thess. 4 : 11 ; 2 Thess. 3 : 11. ** De Wette.

†† *εἰ δὲ ὡς Χριστιανός*, (Sin.[1] Χρηστ—.) ‡‡ *ἐν τῷ μέρει τούτῳ.*

§§ The reading, *ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τούτῳ*, (Sin. A, B, some cursive MSS., Syriac,

of renown—something for which he may well be, not proud, indeed, but thankful, that to him it has been given, not only to believe on Christ, but also to suffer 'for His sake.' Let him exemplify the magnanimity of Moses, who 'esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt.' Let him feel as we, the Apostles, felt, when we 'departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that we were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name.'*

Having thus again warned his readers against incurring suffering as the natural and just reward of their own wrong-doing, and having again exhorted them to the patient and even thankful endurance of such as might befal them on account of their Christian profession, he proceeds in the next two verses to state certain other considerations that might well confirm them in this generous disposition.

5. He had been telling them (vs. 5, 7) that 'the end of all things was at hand,' when 'the living and the dead' should be judged. But it was likewise revealed that '*the judgment*' —the work of Divine visitation and sifting—should begin with God's own people. 'This view,' says Calvín, 'was drawn by Peter from the familiar and uniform teaching of Scripture; which I reckon more probable than that, as others think, some particular passage was intended.'† He may, however, have remembered that when Jeremiah took the cup of God's fury from the hand of the Lord, to 'make all the nations to drink,' he was required to present it first of all to 'Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah, and the kings thereof, and the princes thereof;' and that in the visions of Ezekiel, when the ministers of wrath were to go through the midst of Jerusalem, 'slaying utterly old and young, both maids and little children, and women,' they were expressly charged to

Vulgate, etc.,) is marked as of great authority by Bengel (who follows it in the German version) and Griesbach, and is adopted by Wells, Meyer, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford. But perhaps this reading itself is best explained as equivalent to the received, (so Wells, Meyer, Huther, etc.)

* Phil. 1 : 29; Heb. 11 : 26; Acts 5 : 41, (according to the better reading.)

† 'Hanc sententiam ex trita et perpetua Scripturæ doctrina sumpsit Petrus, idque mihi probabilius est quam quod alii putant, certum aliquem locum notari.'

'begin at God's sanctuary.'* The same principle of procedure holds still; and the reasons that may be assigned for it are various.

In general it may be said that all suffering is occasioned by sin, and that what good men even unjustly suffer at the hands of the wicked is, viewed under another aspect, but a righteous chastisement of their own sinful imperfections. It is then to be considered that, in their case, after all that grace has done for them, sin has acquired additional aggravation, and 'become exceeding sinful.' As the Lord said of old to Israel: 'You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.' †

Moreover, as with nations, so with believers, it is in this life that God manifests His displeasure at their offences.

To this life also is confined the work of perfecting the saints through suffering.

Again, the Church being '*the house of God*,' it the more nearly concerns His honor, that the place of His residence be kept bright and pure.

And, lastly, it is in the Divine order, that the Church shall be associated with Christ in the judgment of the world. Her own judgment, therefore, must precede.

That judgment, accordingly, says Peter, now begins. '*For* it is *the time*'—the set, the fitting, season—'*for the judgment to begin from the house of God*.' ‡ That there was to be such an order in the process of judgment was known, or assumed by the Apostle as known, to his brethren. It was, at least, in itself fixed and certain, as much so as the fact of judgment, and the time appointed for it. But if so, there was the less reason why these sufferers should account their present trial '*a strange thing*,' or murmur against it, or struggle to escape from it, as such.

6. And then, finally, how was this consideration strength-

* Jer. 25 : 15–29 comp. 49 : 12; Ezek. 9 : 6.

† Rom. 7 : 13; Amos 3 : 2.

‡ *ὅτι ὁ καιρὸς τοῦ ἄρξασθαι τὸ κρίμα ἀπὸ τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ Θεοῦ.* Green (to whom Bloomfield assents) suggests, but on insufficient grounds, that perhaps the *ἐστιν* should be supplied before *ἀπὸ τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ Θεοῦ.* (Sin. omits *ὁ*.)

ened when they contrasted that trial, sharp as it was, yet lightened by so many gracious alleviations, with the wrath unmingled that awaited their now secure and boastful adversaries. They themselves were but 'chastened of the Lord, that they might not be condemned with the world.'*

'*For it is the time for the judgment to begin from the house of God; but if first from us, what* shall be *the end of those who disobey the Gospel of God?*'† He does not say, of those who persecute you, nor, of those who worship idols, and live in all manner of impurity. Wherever the Gospel comes, the deadliest sin of which a man can be guilty, just because it is the darkest affront to the truth and love of God, and that which nullifies the provisions of His saving mercy, is unbelief of the Gospel—disobedience to its invitations and commands. If, then, that faith of God's elect whereby they are reconciled to God, and work the work of God, does not exempt them, while on the way to their inheritance, from drinking of the Saviour's cup of sorrow, and being baptized with the baptism that He was baptized withal, what must be the final portion of those who, receiving their good things in this present world, have to answer at last to unpropitiated justice, not only for all their other innumerable transgressions, but also for their frustration of the grace of God by Jesus Christ? If, to purify His own beloved Church from her remaining dross, the Redeemer casts her, though but for a little while, into the furnace, heated it may be seven times, oh! what shall be the terrors of that Tophet, into which His enemies are plunged, and whose fire is not quenched? 'If they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?'‡ No serious mind can ponder the momentous elements that enter into the consideration of the case, without finding itself driven to ask this very question. But an Apostle does not undertake to answer it. He is, so to speak, nonplussed; as when Paul too cried out, 'How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?' Or,

* 1 Cor. 11 : 32.

† *εἰ δὲ πρῶτον ἀφ' ἡμῶν* (Sin.[1] A[2], *ὑμῶν*) *τί τὸ τέλος τῶν ἀπειθούντων* (as in ch. 2 : 7) *κτλ.*

‡ Tit. 1 : 1; John 6 : 28, 29; Mark 9 : 43; 10 : 39; Luke 16 : 25; 23 : 31; Dan. 3 : 19; Is. 30 : 33.

as when, having alluded to the death without mercy of him that despised Moses's law, he lays it upon his readers to determine, if they could, 'how much sorer punishment' was due to the despisers of Christ's Gospel. Just so here: '*What* shall be *the end?*'* Says Leighton: 'There is no speaking of it; a curtain is drawn: silent wonder expresses it best, telling that it cannot be expressed. . . . O eternity, eternity!' Yes, this at least may be asserted with confidence, that, of all possible answers to the question, the very last that Christ's Apostles would have thought of is, that disobedience to the Gospel shall ever *end* in the enjoyment of God's favor, and in life eternal.

The 18th verse is but a variation, taken from the old Greek version of Prov. 11 : 31, on the same awful theme. '*And if*'—as ye know by much painful experience—'*the righteous scarcely is saved,*† *where shall the ungodly and sinner* ‡ *appear?*' It is obvious that, as the words are here used, '*the righteous*' man, on the one hand, is not the perfected saint, but the man who, be his shortcomings what they may, has attained to 'the righteousness of faith;' § and, on the other hand, '*the ungodly* and sinner' is quite as plainly identified as one who 'disobeys the Gospel of God.'

Now, there is still a sense in which even '*the righteous scarcely is saved.*' After all that God has done by sending His Son, and the Son by sending the Holy Spirit, it is only with difficulty, exceeding difficulty, that the work of saving the righteous advances to its consummation. As the gate is strait, so narrow is the way which leadeth unto life. The entrance into the kingdom lies through much tribulation—through fightings without and fears within—through the world's seductions and its frowns—through the utter weakness and continual failures of the flesh, and the many fiery darts of Satan. That any single believer comes off at last victorious against so great apparent odds is to be accounted for only on

* Heb. 2 : 3; 10 : 29.

† *εἰ . . . σώζεται.* Comp. p. 290, note †.

‡ *ὁ ἀσεβὴς καὶ ἁμαρτωλός.* Sin repeats the article before *ἁμ.*

§ Rom. 4 : 13.

the principle, that what with men is impossible is possible with God.*

But if it be so with 'the righteous'—if he who has made his peace with God through the blood of Christ must still be saved so as by fire†—'*where shall the ungodly and sinner*'—the alien from God and sin's willing servant, who persists all his life through in rejecting alike the atonement and the aids of grace—'*where shall he appear?*' Not, you may be sure, in the congregation of the righteous, nor at the marriage-supper of the Lamb, nor on the streets of the New Jerusalem, nor anywhere throughout God's house of many mansions. For him there is no room, no welcome, there. '*Where,*' then, '*shall he appear?*' Again the Apostle simply asks the question, and again he seems to shrink from answering it; as if faith itself feared to follow the outcast into that outer darkness.

Such being the certain fate of the ungodly, let not the child of God be troubled by his 'light affliction which is but for a moment.'‡ Rather let him rejoice while he adores the mercy that saves him from so terrible a doom. And thus we reach the conclusion of the whole matter, as that is presented in the 19th verse.

'*Wherefore*'—on all these various accounts;§ seeing your 'affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground,'‖ but is sent unto you for your trial and purification; since in this way you are made partakers of Christ's sufferings, of Christ's glory, of Christ's Spirit; remembering too that your present passing sorrow, in the severest aspect of it, is what falls to your share in the awards of that general judgment which shall finally and for ever overwhelm your foes; *wherefore*—'*let those also who suffer according to the will of God*'—those whom God appoints to suffering as the consequence of, or in connection with, the doing of His will—for this last condition must never be lost sight of—let such sufferers not quarrel with that wise and gracious will; neither let them be discouraged, or grow faint and weary in

* Matt. 7 : 14; 19 : 26; Acts 14 : 22; 2 Cor. 7 : 5, etc. † 1 Cor. 3 : 15.
‡ 2 Cor. 4 : 17.
§ For we need not, as Alford, rest the conclusion on vv. 17, 18 merely.
‖ Job 5 : 6.

their Christian course; but let them '*also*,'* and that none the less confidently because they suffer—hold on their way in the quiet assurance of faith. Let them '*commit their souls to Him in well-doing*† *as*‡ *to a faithful Creator*.'§ Only where there is a conscientious devotion to duty can there be this confidence toward God. But wherever the former exists, how abundantly justified is the latter! He is the '*Creator*' of the heavens and the earth. He is, therefore, the Almighty, and holds all things in the hollow of His hand. And His faithfulness is equal to His power. You know the 'exceeding great and precious promises,'‖ of present strength and comfort and future glorious deliverance, made to those who suffer for His name's sake. 'God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent: hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?' Give, then, fear to the winds. Maintain the spirit of a living communion with God. '*Commit your souls*'—yourselves—whatever is dearest and most precious—your all—to His keeping and disposal. He will 'keep it against that day.' For the present, He may seem to cast it as fuel to '*the burning*;' but He will not leave it to perish there. 'Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. Delight thyself also in the Lord; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass.' Meanwhile 'there hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man,' or to your brethren that are in the world, (ch. 5 : 9:) 'but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.'**

* *καὶ οἱ πάσχοντες.* The *καί* (neglected also by the Syriac, etc.) is generally regarded as emphasizing the participle. De Wette and Huther take it in close connection with *ὥστε*.

† *παρατιθέσθωσαν* (Luke 12 : 48; 23 : 46; 1 Tim. 1 : 18; 2 Tim. 2 : 2, etc.) *τὰς ψυχὰς ἑαυτῶν* (Bengel, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford, *αὐτῶν*, after Sin. A, G, J, and many cursive MSS.) *ἐν ἀγαθοποιΐᾳ*, (Steiger, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford, [though his text inadvertently retains the singular,] read *ἀγαθοποιΐαις* after A, cursive MSS., Syriac, Vulgate, etc.) The word is in the New Testament only here.

‡ *ὡς* is cancelled by Lachmann and Alford. (Sin. A, B, Vulgate, etc.)

§ *κτιστής*—in the New Testament only here. ‖ 2 Pet. 1 : 4.

** Num. 23 : 19; 2 Tim. 1 : 12; Ps. 37 : 3–5; 1 Cor. 10 : 13.

Lecture XXVII.

1 *Peter* 5 : 1–4.

'The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.'

From the digression that occupies the last eight verses of the 4th chapter, the writer now returns to finish what he had to say of the duties which his brethren owed to one another in the communion of the Church. And his first word is to the presbyters, or elders; for in Greek the same term stands for both.

This name, you are aware, had been in current use in the Jewish Church from the beginning, as denoting the heads of families to whom was largely committed the government of Israel. Originally a designation of age, it soon came to be no less expressive of the office. And when transferred, as it seems to have been as a matter of course, to the superintendents of the Christian Church, composed as that was at first of material drawn chiefly from the Synagogue, it would naturally retain its twofold significance. Only, since the New Testament organization was constructed not so much of tribes and families as of individuals, the secondary sense would in this case more easily become the predominant one.

It is observable that we have no account of the institution of the New Testament eldership. It first comes incidentally into view as something already existing in the church of

Jerusalem; and the next thing we read of it is that, in the course of Paul's first missionary tour in the Lesser Asia, he and Barnabas 'ordained elders in every church'*—plainly because this office was a necessary element of a complete ecclesiastical organization. Very probably some of those very men still survived to receive Peter's generous and affectionate address.

Notice the pains he is at to secure for that address a ready and obedient welcome. Though, like Paul, he too might have been 'much bold in Christ to enjoin,' he prefers, also like Paul, 'for love's sake rather to beseech,' or *exhort*.† He does not obtrude even his legitimate apostolical authority; far less does he assume to speak *ex cathedra* as primate or pope. He takes his place alongside of his brethren, and talks to them as one of themselves—as being himself '*also an elder*,' or, as his own word is, *a co-presbyter* or *fellow-elder*.‡ He served the same Lord as they; and, while his ministerial jurisdiction was of much wider extent, his work and his reward were essentially the same. They would, therefore, understand that what he was about to say to them he considered equally binding on himself. 'There is peculiar force,' says Bengel, 'in the mutual exhortation of equals and colleagues.'§

He does, indeed, claim one distinction, and only one: he was '*a witness of the sufferings of Christ*.' He had seen Jesus Christ our Lord. He had companied with him all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us. And, what he now loved chiefly to remember, distasteful as the theme had once been to him, he had witnessed His sufferings. He had looked on the Saviour's humiliation—His poverty and homelessness and weariness—and while Jews and Gentiles alike despised and rejected Him. He had beheld His tears by the grave of Lazarus, and as He wept over Jerusalem. He had been with him in Gethsemane, and had sat in the court of the High-Priest's house, when they 'did spit in His

* Acts 11 : 30; 14 : 23.

† παρακαλεῖν is the word, both here and in Philem. 9.

‡ συμ-(Sin. συν-)πρεσβύτερος—found nowhere else. Comp. 2 John 1 and 3 John 1.

§ 'Hortatio mutua inter æquales et collegas imprimis valet.'

face, and buffeted Him, and others smote Him with the palms of their hands.' Nor are we willing to doubt that the repentant disciple was among 'the acquaintance' of Jesus, who, with 'the women that followed Him from Galilee, stood afar off beholding,' as He hung and died on the cross.* And as Peter had thus been an eye-witness, so he was now an official witness, of these things—a 'witness unto the people,' or, in the terms of the promise of the risen Saviour, a 'witness unto Him both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.'† Of the apostolic testimony in general 'the sufferings of Christ' formed a very prominent, and in some respects a fundamental, portion. And to that testimony, as resting on what he had seen with his own eyes, the expression of the writer, I believe, refers.

Some distinguished interpreters, however, it is proper to mention, have supposed that along with one or both of these ideas,‡ or even to the exclusion of them altogether,§ Peter calls himself '*a witness of the sufferings of Christ*' on the ground that in his own person he participated in, and so represented, those sufferings, 'always bearing about in the body'—to use Paul's language—'the dying of the Lord Jesus.'‖ But this explanation, which certainly the words before us do not so readily suggest, strikes me as rather a needless refinement. On the other hand, it was as natural as it was likely to be influential in commending, to the members and ministers of the suffering churches, whatever the writer had to say, on the behalf of Christ, to remind them of what he was so much in the habit of announcing in his oral addresses,** to wit, that he was one of the 'witnesses chosen before of God' to publish, and as of their own knowledge to attest, '*the sufferings of Christ*,' and whatever else it concerned the Church to know of her Saviour's life on earth. Thus understood, moreover, the clause involves a delicate assertion of the writer's apostolic standing.

* 1 Cor. 9 : 1; Acts 1 : 21; Matt. 26 : 67, 69; Luke 23 : 49, etc.
† Acts 1 : 8; 13 : 31. ‡ Gerhard, Bengel, Besser, Wiesinger.
§ Calvin, Huther. ‖ 2 Cor. 4 : 10.
** Acts 1 : 22; 2 : 32; 3 : 15; 5 : 32; 10 : 39, 41. Comp. 2 Pet. 1 : 16.

And then he immediately returns to what was common to him with his brethren, by adding, '*and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed*,' or *about to be revealed*.* Of his own personal interest in that coming glory, Peter, it appears, had not a whit more doubt, than in regard to either of the other two facts previously mentioned. He was assured of it both by the express promises of his faithful Lord, and by the ever present witness of the Spirit in his heart. As his faith, upheld by the Saviour's intercessory grace, had not failed in its hour of sorest trial, when Satan desired to have the Apostles that he might sift them as wheat, so he well knew that, in the kingdom appointed unto those who had followed Christ in His temptations, one, and we may well believe not the least conspicuous, of the apostolic thrones was reserved for him.† This illustrious destiny, however, so far from separating him in fact or in feeling from the humble elders to whom he wrote, is mentioned for the sake of conciliating the greater confidence in his counsels, as of 'one that had obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful,' and as a guarantee of his community of interests with them, and of their future and everlasting union with himself, if they too, in their several spheres of duty and trial, were found following him, as he followed Christ.‡

Let us, then, pass on to the exhortation itself, to which so noble a preamble introduces us.

'*The elders that* § *are among you*'—all of them, without exception; for there is no need to confine the address to such as 'labored in the word and doctrine,'‖ even though these may have been specially intended—'*I exhort, who am a fellow-elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory about to be revealed: Feed the flock of God.*'

* μελλούσης ἀποκαλύπτεσθαι. Comp. Rom. 8 : 18, τὴν μέλλουσαν δόξαν ἀποκαλυφθῆναι.

† Luke 22 : 28–32. ‡ 1 Cor. 7 : 25; 11 : 1.

§ For τούς Lachmann and Alford read οὖν, (A, B, and some cursive MSS.,) which Huther also favors, and would refer to ἀγαθοποιίαις of ch. 4 : 19. Sin. οὖν τούς.

‖ 1 Tim. 5 : 17.

This, you might suppose, can have been meant only for ministers of the Gospel—for pastors who were also preachers—men ordained to 'feed' the people of God 'with knowledge and understanding' (Jer. 3 : 15) from the storehouse of the Divine word. And it is quite true that this was the main business of some of those addressed. But that the restriction is still unnecessary may be inferred from the expression Peter employs. That expression is, indeed, one of the two* used by the Lord to himself, when committing to the restored Apostle the care of His sheep. But it comes directly from the general name of shepherd, and so includes all the departments of 'the faithful herdman's art'†—the guiding, ruling, defending, healing, as well as the feeding, of his charge. The exhortation, therefore, is to *act as shepherds to—to tend—the flock of God.*

And this is confirmed by the explanatory addition, '*taking the oversight* thereof,' or *overseeing*‡ it ; for it is the exercise, not the assumption, of the oversight, that is thought of. The Greek word is kindred with one of the names applied to our Lord in the last verse of the second chapter, and there rendered *Bishop* in our common version. Some, accordingly, would translate here also on the same principle: *discharging the duty of bishop, exercising the episcopal office,* etc.§ But I incline to think that both here and there the Apostle regarded less the ecclesiastical title, *bishops*—which indeed belonged, beyond all decent question or cavil, to the New Testament *presbyters* or *elders*—than the radical meaning of the word, which is simply to *inspect* or *oversee.*‖ What Peter then says really amounts to this: Act your part as shepherds in the oversight of the flock.

And how much is there at once of motive, and of encouragement, and of warning, in being reminded to whom that flock belongs! It is not your flock, but *God's ;* and His are

* ποιμαίνειν. The other is βόσκειν. John 21 : 15–17. See *Revision of Jude* 12, note 2.

† Milton's *Lycidas*, 121.

‡ ἐπισκοποῦντες—cancelled by Tischendorf, after Sin.[1] B.

§ Calvin, Benson, Doddridge, Semler, Macknight, Barnes.

‖ Comp. p. 183, note ‡‡.

the pastures in which it feeds. He 'purchased it with His own blood,' and through the pathless wilderness He is leading it to His heavenly fold. Meanwhile, 'the eyes of the Lord are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year,' as well as upon the under-shepherds through whom partly He now provides for its nourishment and its safety.*

It was, however, but a portion of the one, wide-spread flock of God, for whose safe-keeping these elders were immediately responsible; and hence the qualification, 'the flock of God *that is among you*;' for the marginal rendering,† *as much as in you is*, is in this instance altogether inferior. It was probably suggested as a way of avoiding the seeming awkwardness of speaking of the elders as *among* the church-members, and then of the church-members as *among* the elders. But may not this very phraseology have been adopted for the purpose of impressing the more vividly on both parties the peculiar intimacy of their union as of the same body and members one of another? (Rom. 12 : 5.) The word‡ for *among* is really that which answers to our *in*. And a similar use of it occurs in Paul's address to the elders of Ephesus, when he requires them to 'take heed to all the flock *in* which'—not *over* which —'the Holy Ghost had made them overseers.' We are even reminded of that primary and deeper reciprocity, in which is the Church's life: 'I am in the Father, and ye in me, and I in you.'§

And now let us see in what spirit the elders were to exercise that pastoral oversight, which was the function of their office. This is defined in three particulars, and in each case first negatively and then positively.

'*Not by constraint*,' or as of necessity;‖ not because you

* Acts 20 : 28; Deut. 11 : 12.

† Adopted by Erasmus, Calvin, Vatablus, and allowed as possible by Aretius and Winer. But the sense is rather flat, and the phrase itself, *τὸ ἐν ὑμῖν ποίμνιον*, by no means parallel to *τὸ κατ' ἐμέ* of Rom. 1 : 15, or *τὸ ἐξ ὑμῶν* of Rom. 12 : 18.

‡ *ἐν*. § Acts 20 : 28; John 14 : 20.

‖ *ἀναγκαστῶς*—in the New Testament only here. Comp. 1 Cor. 9 : 16, 17; Philem. 14.

find yourselves in a relation and under obligations, from which you know not how to escape with honor or safety; not as Jonah struggled beneath the burden of the Lord, which he would fain have shaken off, and could not; *but* '*willingly*,'* as Jacob served Laban for Rachel's sake, from the love you bear to the Lord, and to His flock, and to the holy and blessed, however toilsome and perilous, work itself.

'*Nor for filthy lucre*.'† Without doubt, the laborer is worthy of his hire; and it is Christ's express ordinance, that they who preach the Gospel shall live by the Gospel.‡ The arrangement is for the benefit of all concerned; but it is true also, that the great business and aim of Christ's ministers is to preach the Gospel, not to live by it; to feed the flock, not to feed themselves; to spend and be spent in Christ's service, not to bear the bag in His company. Alas for the man who intrudes into this sacred office, or holds on to it, that he 'may eat a piece of bread,' or enjoy the emoluments of the richest bishopric in Christendom.§ What were otherwise an honorable subsistence—honorable beyond the patrimony of princes—becomes by that man's touch '*filthy lucre*' indeed—*base gains*—more sordid by far than the fragments from other men's tables, with which the helpless but honest beggar seeks to allay his hunger—the very reward of 'Balaam, the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness.'‖ Beware, then, lest your willingness be such only as is stimulated by the hope of the meat or the gold that perisheth; '*but*' let it be that '*of a ready mind*'**—of a mind forward of itself, not measuring its efforts by the prospect of external advantage, but quickened and impelled by its own inward and Divine principles.

* After ἑκουσίως Meyer and Lachmann read (and Steiger doubtfully) κατὰ θεόν, (Sin. A.)

† μηδὲ (Tischendorf, μὴ) αἰσχροκερδῶς, (found only here; the adjective in 1 Tim. 3 : 3, 8 and Tit. 1 : 7.)

‡ Luke 10 : 7; 1 Cor. 9 : 14.

§ Ezek. 34 : 1–10; 2 Cor. 12 : 15; John 12 : 6; 1 Sam. 2 : 36.

‖ 2 Pet. 2 : 15

** προθύμως—in the New Testament only here. Comp. the use of the adjective in Mark 14 : 38; Rom. 1 : 15, and of the noun in 2 Cor. 8 : 11, 12, 19; 9 : 2.

'*Nor as being lords over*'*—*overruling*, says the margin—*lording over* perhaps gives it best, whether what is condemned be the bare possession and exercise of lordship,† or the tyrannical exercise of it to the injury and oppression of others ;‡ inasmuch as the claim to any such thing, even in its mildest form, within the Church is itself a usurpation, and an offence against the law of the Church's constitution. All genuine rule here is in no sense a lordship, but an administration under Christ.§ Little did Peter dream, except as it may have been revealed to him by the Spirit, of the heights of blasphemous arrogance to which some were afterward to ascend, on the lying pretence of being his successors.

'*Nor as lording over* God's *heritage*.' The word *God's*, you can see for yourselves by glancing at your books, is not in the original ; and *heritage* also is there in the plural number ‖—literally then, '*nor as lording over the heritages*.' But there is no reference here, as has been rather absurdly supposed, to church property,** or to the possessions of worldly rulers,†† or the province of the Roman proconsul,‡‡ or to the clergy as distinct from the laity.§§ Primarily the word in the singular means *a lot*, and then *an allotted portion, a possession, heritage ;* in which secondary sense it is in the Old Testament applied to Israel as the lot of God's inheritance.‖‖ And, accordingly,

* *μηδ' ὡς κατακυριεύοντες.*

† In favor of *κατακυριεύω=κυριεύω* (Leigh, Wolf, Steiger, Trollope, etc.) appeal may be made to Matt. 20 : 25 and Mark 10 : 42 as compared with Luke 22 : 25 and 2 Cor. 1 : 24 ; also to frequent Septuagint usage, as Ps. 72 : 8, etc.

‡ According to the frequent force of *κατά* with the genitive. Comp. Acts 19 : 16 and Sept. Ps. 10 : 10. In this sense the word is here taken by many of the Roman Catholic divines, as Bellarmine, Corn. a Lapide, Estius, (misquoted by De Wette ;) also by Guyse, Pott, Bretschneider, Wahl, Huther, Alford, etc.

§ Erasmus : 'Non est tyrannis, sed administratio.'

‖ *τῶν κλήρων.*

** Dodwell's interpretation, which I find mentioned with respect only by Whitby and Schleusner.

†† Cocceius. ‡‡ Hammond.

§§ Corn. a Lapide and some other Roman Catholic writers. Jerome and Œcumenius are often cited as giving the same view. *Clergy* is the word of Wiclif and the Rhenish for the transferred *cleris* of the Vulgate and other Latin versions.

‖‖ God's נַחֲלָה, (Deut. 9 : 29, Sept. *κλῆρος* ; Deut. 32 : 9, Is. 19 : 25, etc., Sept. *κληρονομία.*)

this idea has often been supposed to be here transferred to the Christian Church.* But, considering the change of number already adverted to, I think it better, and it is at least quite as common, to understand by '*the heritages*' the particular churches as allotted by the great Lord of all to the several elders respectively—these elders' *parishes*, as it stands in two of our oldest English versions.† That allotment had been made for the good of the churches themselves, not at all for the temporal glory or aggrandizement of the elders. The former were not subjected to the arbitrary control of the latter, but intrusted, by Him who gave His life for the sheep, to their loving pastoral care. The lordly spirit, therefore, was utterly unsuitable to their official relation. And it was equally unbecoming their character as Christians.

This last thought is finely suggested by the positive duty that is set over against this special delinquency: '*but being ensamples*'—*becoming, making yourselves, patterns*‡—'*to the flock*,' as in all other good things,§ so not least in the essential graces of humility, brotherly-kindness, and charity. Let it suffice to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said: 'Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.' ‖

Having thus sought to guard his brethren in the eldership against the very vices, which subsequent ages have shown to be the easily besetting sins of the Christian ministry,** and

* Calvin (who, however, recognizes here the idea of a plurality of churches) and many others. Our translators follow the Geneva version.

† Tyndale and Crammer.—Comp. the *προσεκληρώθησαν (were allotted)* of Acts 17 : 4, and the address of Theophanes, a Sicilian bishop of the 12th century, to his hearers: *ὦ κλῆρος ἡμῶν*. See also Suicer, *s. v.*; Marck's *Scripturarum Exercitationes*, xxv.; and Wolf's *Curæ*.

‡ *τύποι γινόμενοι*. Comp. p. 192, note ‖, and *Lect. on Thess.*, p. 64.

§ 1 Tim. 4 : 12; Tit. 2 : 7. ‖ Acts 20 : 35; Matt. 20 : 25–8.

** Calvin: 'tria vitia . . . quæ plurimum obesse solent.'

having set before them the true ideal of their holy office, the Apostle ends by pointing them to the exceeding great reward of every faithful pastor of the flock of God.

'*And*'—in sure sequence and as the infallible result of such a ministry—'*when the chief Shepherd shall appear*,' or *is manifested*,* '*ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away*.' Who the chief Shepherd was, was well known to the elders, and Peter needed not to name Him—'the good Shepherd'—'that great Shepherd of the sheep'†—and Lord of the shepherds, who over all the earth and in all ages of the Church assigns to every man his charge. It is indeed probable that very few, if any, of these elders had ever seen the Lord Jesus; but they doubted no more than Peter himself did, not only that He had already been manifested in flesh, but that He was yet a second time to be manifested in glory.‡ This also, therefore, is as usual taken for granted, and what is directly affirmed is merely the personal interest of faithful pastors in the future revelation of Christ. In that day of solemn reckoning with His servants, '*ye shall receive*' from His own blessed hand, and *bear off* § amid the acclamations of assembled saints and angels, '*the* || *unfading crown of glory*.' The humble, laborious shepherds of the flock shall now reign as kings, and glory itself shall be their crown**—not such glory as once decked the brows of the conquerors and monarchs of the earth, and soon was quenched in the darkness and dishonor of the sepulchre. For theirs was 'a corruptible crown,' but this is 'an incorruptible,' and, lasting as long as that which beams on the head of the chief Shepherd Himself, shall evermore increase in brightness. It is 'the crown of life'—a life subject to no attaint of death or decay—which He who 'was dead and is alive' promised to give to the man, who in his appointed station in the Church should be found,

* Ἀρχιποίμην—in the New Testament only here.—φανερωθέντος, the same verb as in ch. 1 : 20. See p. 78, note *.

§ John 10 : 11; Heb. 13 : 20. ‡ See on ch. 1 : 7, 8, 13.

‡ κομιεῖσθε—see p. 42, note *.

|| τόν—singling out this crown as the only one of its kind. A similar disregard of the article occurs in the common version of Rev. 2 : 10.

** '*Of glory*' being the genitive of apposition—not (as Kuinöl, Rosenmüller, Bloomfield, etc.) *glorious crown*. Comp. Heb. 2 : 9.

through all toil and poverty and tribulation, 'faithful unto death.*

It may deserve to be mentioned that, while the word† here translated '*that fadeth not away*' seems to be but another form of one that is rendered in the same way at ch. 1 : 4, many ‡ think it rather bears an allusion to the poetic fancy of an unfading flower, called the amaranth—the 'immortal amarant'§—just as if we were to say, *the amaranthine crown*, or '*evergreen wreath*'‖ *of glory*. But this, at the best, is very doubtful.

In the present lecture we have been led to review the position, duties, and reward, of the shepherds and overseers of 'the flock of God.' But is there nothing in this passage for you, the private members of the Church? Ah! how much is there in that one expression, '*the flock of God*'! and how much in the fact, that of that flock the chief Shepherd and Overseer (ch. 2 : 25) is the Son of God! This is 'the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel,' who in the days of old 'led Joseph like a flock' through the Red Sea and the wilderness. 'His ways are everlasting;' His power, wisdom, and love, 'the same yesterday and to-day and for ever.' See that ye rebel not against Him, nor listen to the 'voice of strangers.'** Be loyal and cordial in your submission, yielding yourselves gladly to His guiding and restraining hand. And then how secure may you feel yourselves to be there! The way by which He is leading you may sometimes seem 'strange' (ch. 4 : 12) and difficult and full of peril. But, if it be the way of His choosing, you know that it is the safest and the best.

* 1 Cor. 9 : 25; Rev. 2 : 8–10. Comp. *Lect. on Thess.* p. 160.

† ἀμαράντινον (Hesychius, ἄσηπτον—as from α privative and μαραίνομαι)—in the New Testament only here.

‡ From Stephens to Alford. Bloomfield quotes from Clement of Alexandria, *Paedag.* iii. 8, 73, in proof that he too so understood the word: ὁ καλὸς τοῦ ἀμαράντου στέφανος ἀπόκειται τοῖς καλῶς πεπολιτευμένοις.

§ Milton, *Paradise Lost*, iii. 353, 360. Comp. xi. 77–8:

> '... from their blissful bow'rs
> Of Amarantin shade.'

‖ Peile.

** Gen. 49 : 24; Ps. 80 : 1; Hab. 3 : 6; Heb. 13 : 8; John 10 : 5.

Remember, too, that He who gave Himself for you gave you also, when He ascended up far above all heavens, as one of the parting pledges of His unalterable love, 'pastors and teachers,' those under-shepherds of the sheep. Over them, as over you, His will is still supreme, at the same time that they are your servants for Jesus' sake. 'Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, . . . all are yours.'*

But in this, as in every other moral and spiritual relation, the duties are, of course, reciprocal. While devoting themselves faithfully to the discharge of their legitimate functions, they represent to you, however faintly, Christ Himself—His authority and His grace. Obey them, therefore, and esteem them very highly in love, both for Christ's sake and for their work's sake. They claim no 'dominion over your faith,' but, holding up ever before your eyes the cross of your Redeemer, unfolding the precepts and promises of His word, administering the sacramental seals of His covenant, and blessing you in His name, they 'are helpers of your joy.'†

And, finally, you too may aspire to your full share in this glorious recompense of their reward. 'The crown of righteousness' is not for Paul alone, but for 'all them also that love the appearing' of the Lord. Nor was that spoken to pastors and teachers alone: 'Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.' No, nor that yet greater word by Daniel: 'They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever.'‡

* Eph. 4 : 10, 11; 1 Cor. 3 : 22; 2 Cor. 4 : 5.

† Heb. 13 : 17; 1 Thess. 5 : 13; 2 Cor. 1 : 24.

‡ 2 Tim. 4 : 8; James 5 : 19, 20; Dan. 12 : 3.—On the general subject of this Lecture, comp. *Lect. on Thess.* pp. 312–25.

LECTURE XXVIII.

1 *PETER* 5 : 5–7.

'LIKEWISE, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time: casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you.'

HERE we have the word of exhortation directed first to another class of church-members, and then to all without distinction in church-communion. But who are the '*younger*'? and who the '*the elder*,' to whom they are required to submit themselves?

These questions have occasioned no small discussion, and yet they would scarcely have been raised at all, were it not that the latter of the two terms had just been used in the first verse in its official sense. Hence very many* would retain that sense here also, and understand by the '*younger*' the unofficial members,† or the younger members as being the most prone to insubordination,‡ or church-officers of lower degree, as deacons, etc.§ On the other hand, it is obvious that our translators preferred to consider the two classes as opposed chiefly, if not altogether, in respect of age; nor do I regard the objections‖ to this view as by any means conclusive.

* From Bede to Alford. † So most. ‡ Grotius, De Wette.

§ Cajetan, Salmeron, Corn. a Lapide, Mosheim, Pyle, Trollope; and so *νεώτεροι* is understood in Acts 5 : 6 by Hammond, Mosheim, Kuinöl, Olshausen, Meyer, Conybeare and Howson; but in both instances, I conceive, erroneously.

‖ As stated by Beza, Estius, Brown, etc.

One of these objections is the unlikelihood of such a sudden change in the meaning of the word for '*the elder*.'* But, as similar changes are far from being rare in the sacred writings,† so it is curious that the particular example thus objected to occurs again in one of the Epistles of Paul. 'Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren; the elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity.' Here there can be little doubt that it is the age of the several parties that is exclusively thought of. But only a few verses after in the same chapter the official sense comes as distinctly into view: 'Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in word and doctrine. Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.'‡

Again, it is said that the connective '*likewise*' seems to imply that the duty now to be enjoined is, if not strictly correlative to the one immediately preceding, at least kindred with it, or of 'the same general family of duties.'§ This may be granted, without our being compelled thereby to give up the interpretation in question. The elders had just been warned against the exhibition of any spirit of lordliness in the exercise of their office. And then the younger members of the Christian community are exhorted, on the same principle of keeping every man in his own place, to submit themselves to the older. But it may be, that all the likeness intended between the case of the elders and that of the younger was, that they were both 'under law to Christ.' (1 Cor. 9 : 21.)

Appeal is also made, however, to the apostolic method of joining together strictly correlative duties, as of husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants.‖ The previous verses, therefore, having set forth the duty of the office-bearers to their churches, we might now expect a statement to follow of the duty of the churches to their office-bearers.

* This objection Alford regards as 'fatal to the view.'

† For example, 1 Pet. 3 : 1.—See p. 187, note *.

‡ 1 Tim. 5 : 1, 2, 17, 19.

§ Brown. Comp. ch. 2 : 17 and 3 : 1, 7. Sin.[1] ὁμοίως δέ.

‖ 1 Ch. 3 : 1, 7; Eph. 5 : 22, 25; 6 : 1, 4, 5, 9; Col. 3 : 18–22; 4 : 1.

But in the present case — unless, indeed, the expression '*younger*' of the fifth verse is to be taken as fully equivalent to 'the heritages' of the third, that is, for the entire body of a church, with the single exception of the presbyters—we must admit a modification in one term of the comparison; and why not of the other? Only recollect that, according to the primary import of the term, the probabilities of the case, and the example of Hebrew history, the elders* generally may have been taken from among the elderly members of the congregation, and should we not sufficiently preserve a correspondence with what precedes by saying, that, in passing on to the universal enforcement in the next clause of the duty of mutual submission, the writer, without losing sight of these official elders, now extends his regard to the whole of the class to which by age they belonged, and is thus led to make the natural opposite of that class the other member in the present antithesis?

Lastly, it is objected that 'not submission, but respect, is due from the young to the old.'† But if, as is certain from what immediately follows, there is a sense in which submission also is due from every man, even to those who are naturally, socially, or officially his equals or inferiors, still more emphatically is that true of the young in relation to their superiors in age and experience.

If, after all, the point is to be reckoned a doubtful one, the ambiguity might be preserved in English thus: '*Likewise*, ye *younger*, *submit yourselves unto* your *elders*.'‡ But, for myself, I see nothing that need hinder us from acquiescing in the idea that the Apostle here proclaims the law of nature and of Christ regarding what is becoming in the young toward those more advanced in life. They are to *submit themselves*—to cherish and manifest a spirit of deference and subordination. If 'the glory of young men is their strength,' let them know also

* הַזְּקֵנִים, *ἡ γερουσία, senatus.* † Brown.

‡ Sin.: *τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις*. But in the received text the article is wanting: *νεώτεροι . . . πρεσβυτέροις=younger*, (all such, and as being such,) . . . *to elder*, (all who are so, and just because they are so.) Wiesinger errs in saying, that the absence of the article before the second word requires us to take it in the ecclesiastical sense.

that 'the beauty of old men is the gray head'—yea, 'a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness;' and, wherever it is seen among the children of God in the household of faith, that may well be taken for granted. Let not the eager energy of the young, then, seek to thrust the aged into the background, or challenge equal position and respect with them. 'Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom.' If even in the regular administration of the discipline of the church the prerogative of age was not to be disregarded, (1 Tim. 5 : 1, 2,) much more should it be recognized in the ordinary intercourse of the young. 'Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honor the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the Lord.'*

I am well aware how little agreeable such teaching is to an age which rather laughs and prides itself in the development of quite another spirit, while the natural bonds of the family and of society too often seem as if dissolving before its eyes. Both in the Church and in the management of civil affairs, the tendency now is rather to set the aged aside, and to pay our court to the young. And, as the lessons of flattery are easily learned, we need not wonder at the many instances in which 'the child behaves himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honorable.' Is there not danger that the threatened curse of Judah may light on us, 'And I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them'?†

Meanwhile the Divine law on the subject, however it may be trifled with by a reckless frivolity, or scouted by the profane, suffers no change for the accommodation of Young America: 'Ye *younger, submit yourselves unto the elder.*' Readily yield to them the precedence that is theirs of right. In every good thing be not ashamed to follow their example. Respect their judgment. Weigh well, before you venture to disregard, the counsels of their experience. And, above all, think not to show either manliness or wit by taking upon you in their presence, and as against them, the airs of an independent self-assertion.

* Prov. 20 : 29; 16 : 31; Job 32 : 7; Lev. 19 : 32. † Is 3 : 4, 5.

It is, indeed, quite noticeable how largely this same doctrine of submission enters into the code of Christian morals. We find it pressed continually as the main point in the duty of the wife to her husband, of the child to the parent, of the servant to his master, of the citizen to the state, of churches to their presbyters, of the younger to the older. But how far Christ's free and generous Gospel is from either inculcating a servile spirit on the one side, or tolerating an arbitrary, despotic spirit on the other side, in any one of these relations, is apparent enough from the very next clause of the verse, '*Yea, all* of you *be subject one to another*'—or, since the word is the same as before, and at the parallel, Eph. 5 : 21 : '*Nay, all submitting to one another*' *—'*be clothed with humility.*'

But how, you may ask, are all the members of a well-ordered church to practise mutual submission? Is there not something of contradiction and paradox in the precept itself? It is at any rate a paradox of frequent occurrence in the New Testament. It came first from the lips of our blessed Lord Himself: 'He that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.' And how was it illustrated by His own example: 'So after He had washed their feet, and had taken His garments, and was set down again, He said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I, then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.' It is but a varied expression of the same great lesson when, writing to some of the churches here addressed by Peter, Paul exhorted them to fulfil the law of Christ by bearing one another's burdens. And so in another Epistle,

* *πάντες δὲ ἀλλήλοις ὑποτασσόμενοι.* For *δέ*—(Camerarius: 'Sed verius est, ut omnes, etc.')—comp. p. 487, note 2.—Mill, (*Prol.* 1502,) Huther, and Wiesinger condemn *ὑποτασσόμενοι* (see p. 357) as a gloss, and the word has been cancelled by Wells, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford, on the authority of Sin. A, B, some cursive MSS., Syriac, Vulgate, etc. Mill, Lachmann, De Wette, (if this reading be followed,) and Huther then construe *ἀλλήλοις* with *ὑποτάγητε*; Wells, Tischendorf, Wiesinger, and Alford, with *ἐγκομβώσασθε*, as a dative of advantage.

'In lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves,' every man knowing more of his own weakness and imperfections than he can know of those of his neighbors, and it being every man's business to judge himself, rather than his neighbors. And yet again, 'In honor preferring one another,' taking the lead one of another in all mutual honorable observance.*

Nor in all this is there any real difficulty, when love is the interpreter. Every act of cheerful self-denial for the good of others—the ready recognition of whatever in them is valuable and praiseworthy—the yielding for their sakes of our own interests or rights—the joy of Apostles in being 'offered on the sacrifice and service' of the Church's faith (Phil. 2 : 17) —a mother's exhausting vigils by the cradle of her sick babe —the patriot rushing on death that his country may live— George Washington lifting his hat to the slave—Queen Victoria ministering at the bedside of poverty—what are these but so many illustrations of a principle, that is the root and essence of all genuine heroism, and of the most refined forms of a true courtesy?

It is, indeed, only where breathes the spirit of Christian humility, that this precept of submission of even the highest to the lowest is most easily understood, and brings forth the most abundant fruit. The knowledge and habitual remembrance of what we ourselves are, not as compared with others, or as tried by the standards of worldly estimation, but as in the sight of God—this, together with the experience of that grace of God, which, when we were utterly guilty, and vile, and helpless, did not loathe us, nor despise us, nor exact upon us, but loved us even to death, both makes a man think humbly of himself, and inspires something of Christ's own meekness and gentleness into his dealings with all around.† Therefore says the Apostle: '*Be clothed with humility.*'

The Greek verb ‡ is not found elsewhere in the New Tes-

* Luke 22 : 26; John 13 : 12–15; Gal. 6 : 2; Phil. 2 : 3; Rom. 12 : 10, (*προηγούμενοι.*)

† Comp. p. 210.

‡ *ἐγ-*(Sin. *ἐν-*)*-κομβόομαι.*

tament, and what is here its specific shade of meaning has been a good deal disputed. Some derive it from a word that denoted a small white garment worn by slaves over their sleeveless under-vest,* and would expound it thus: *Putting on humility as a slave's frock, shows that you consider yourselves servants one of another.* On the other hand, some, referring partly to the color of that garment, which is also said † to have been worn as well by boys and girls of good birth, would make the idea of decoration the prominent one: *Adorn yourselves*, or, more commonly, *Be inwardly adorned, with humility.*‡ The better derivation, however, is from a word § signifying a strip of cloth, a fillet or string, for binding or fastening. And this might easily enough suggest the idea that humility is here represented as the belt or girdle which secures all the other Christian graces: *Be girdled with humility;* so the phrase has been rendered.‖ But the form of the original rather implies, that humility is not itself the girdle, but that which the girdle is to bind. I should therefore be willing to translate, *Gird on humility*,** and regard Peter's strange word as simply an emphasizing at least of Paul's injunction, if not intentionally also of his expression, in Col. 3 : 12: 'Put on †† . . . humbleness of mind.' On the whole, I doubt not that the essential import is given by Bengel thus: 'Clothe and wrap yourselves in humility, so that it shall be impossible by any force to tear from you this covering.' ‡‡

* So Julius Pollux (*Onom.* iv. 18) describes the *ἐγκόμβωμα*. The above explanation of the text is adopted, among others, by Heinsius, Grotius, Fritzsche, De Wette, Robinson.

† By Semler and others; and the statement is favored by a passage cited from Varro by Nonius, (14. 38.)—Other points alleged by those who adopt this view are these: *κομβώματα* is in Suidas = *καλλωπίσματα, decorations*; *ἐγκομβώματα* are mentioned by Theodotion among the female ornaments of Is. 3 : 20; and the verb itself is sometimes defined in the glossaries by *στολίσασθαι*.

‡ To this effect Pagninus, Beza, the Geneva Version, Bishops' Bible, Pyle, Meyer, and others.

§ *κόμβος*.—*ἐγκόμβωμα* rather comes from the verb.

‖ Brown, Peile. See Hammond's note. It may be added, that in Is. 3 : 20 Theodotius's *ἐγκομβώματα* stands for קְשָׁרִים, *girdles*.

** Alford, I find, has adopted the same phrase.

†† Paul: *ἐνδύσασθε ταπεινοφροσύνην*; Peter: *ἐγκομβώσασθε ταπειν*.

‡‡ '*Induite vos et involvite*, ut amictus humilitatis nulla vi vobis detrahi possit.'

Our Apostle's earnestness in this matter is then justified by a reference to the declared judgment of God in regard to it. This he finds in Prov. 3 : 34, and, as usual, he silently adopts the passage from the Greek version, '*For God resisteth*'—*arrays Himself against* *—'*the proud;*' in the words of Leighton, 'He singles out pride for His grand enemy, and sets Himself in battle array against it;' '*but to the humble He giveth grace*,' † and still 'more grace' ‡—manifests, that is, His special favor in growing measure for ever. As sang the Blessed Virgin: 'He hath showed strength with His arm; He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich He hath sent empty away.' § Or, to use Augustine's figure: As water runs down from the swelling hills, and flows together into the lowly vale, so grace flows not but into humble hearts.‖ To a very great extent the past history of the world, even in this state of partial results, illustrates these two modes of God's dealing with men. But in the future consummation, to which the whole Epistle, especially in this last section of it, so largely refers us, they are yet to receive their perfect and final development. Then shall great Babylon—she that 'glorified herself and lived deliciously'—go down like a millstone in the fiery flood; and the persecuted Church—the betrothed spouse of Christ—recalled from the wilderness, and arrayed in the robes of joy and praise, shall be seen sitting beside her Lord at the marriage supper of the Lamb.**

This general idea appears in many versions and commentaries, as the Syriac, Œcumenius, (*ἐνειλήσασθε, περιβάλεσθε.* Hesychius, as cited by Bengel, makes *ἐγκεκόμβωται=ἐνείληται*; Phavorinus, as cited by Cocceius,=*περιείληται*,) Luther, Camerarius, Estius, Bloomfield, Huther, Wiesinger, etc.

* *ἀντιτάσσεται.* † *ταπεινοῖς δὲ δίδωσι χάριν.*

‡ James 4 : 6, etc., where the same passage is quoted, and in the same words.

§ Luke 1 : 51–3.

‖ 'Confluit enim aqua ad humilitatem convallis, defluit de tumoribus collis.' Leighton: 'His sweet dews and showers of grace slide off the mountains of pride, and fall on the low valleys of humble hearts, and make them pleasant and fertile.'

** Rev. 18 : 7, 21; 12 : 6; 19 : 7–9.

With what persuasive force does the writer, in view of this method of the Divine administration, and with his eye fixed full on the glorious issue, now summon his brethren once more to a humble, cheerful acquiescence in the will of God concerning them, however for the present their lot might 'seem to be not joyous, but grievous'! * '*Humble yourselves,*† *therefore, under the mighty* ‡ *hand of God, that He*'—some would say, *that it* §—'*may exalt you in due time:* ‖ *casting all your care*'—or rather, *all your anxiety,*** such as readily divides and distracts the mind in days of affliction and danger; the word is altogether different from that in the latter clause—'*upon Him; for He careth for you.*' ††

The hand of God is '*mighty*'—irresistible—whether in the restraining and subduing of His enemies, or in the defence and chastisement of His children, and their ultimate deliverance and exaltation. Seek not, suffering saints, to escape from its grasp. Shrink not, when it is lifted up to smite. Nowhere can you be so safe as in that 'mighty hand,' or even beneath the strokes which it inflicts of a Father's love. '*Humble yourselves, therefore,*' receiving in silent, meek submission whatever humiliation it may now lay upon you. For this is your time of trial, and, when the paternal rod meets thus with the child-like spirit, will be surely followed by another time of healing and joy. 'Our light affliction, which is but for a moment,' needs but to be endured in faith, and then it 'worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' ‡‡ See that you do not frustrate the gracious purpose of God, and lose the blessing of sorrow. Rather make that purpose yours also. '*Humble yourselves under His mighty hand, that*'—in accordance with the rule of His providence, and the oft-

* Heb. 12 : 11.

† *ταπεινώθητε.* Macknight, like the Vulgate and some other Latin versions, retains the passive form, *be humbled.* But see p. 137, note †.

‡ *κραταιάν*—in the New Testament only here.—Sin. *χεῖραν.*

§ Syriac, Hensler.

‖ The addition *ἐπισκοπῆς, (in the time of visitation,)* adopted by Lachmann from A and the Vulgate, seems to have come from ch. 2 : 12.

** *μέριμναν*, from *μερίζω.* The other word is *μέλει.* Comp. Matt. 6 : 25–34, where the word so often used by our Lord is *μεριμνάω.*

†† Sin.[1] *ἡμῶν.* ‡‡ 2 Cor. 4 : 17, 18.

repeated promise of the Saviour *—'*He may exalt you in due time.*' Leave to Him the determination of the time. It is already fixed. And, when it comes, He will not forget what belongs to it. Your present deep humiliation, even though you be called to lie in martyrs' graves, will be as nothing, compared with the heights to which you shall then be raised. Through the opened heavens the cloud shall again appear, and by that same '*mighty hand*,' beneath which you now bend and weep, you shall be 'caught up unto God and to His throne.' †

Meanwhile, draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you. Even now, in afflicting you, He dealeth with you as with sons. Do you deal with Him as with a Father. Have faith in God—in His love, no less than in His power. In all your affliction He is afflicted. The very burdens He appoints unto you, He bears with you and for you. Yea, the whole of them He is willing to take upon Himself, by at least furnishing you with strength of His own to bear them. He says: 'Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee.' Take Him at His word, and He will be as good as His word. '*All your anxiety*'—whether for the body or the soul, whether for this life or for that which is to come—all of it '*cast upon Him*,' and know that in no other way can you please Him so well. You will thus best manifest your humility, and that filial confidence which is His due: '*for He careth for you.*' Your interests are His concern, and that far more than they are yours. Were it otherwise, He might let you alone, and certainly would not be at this pains in training and disciplining you; but, because it is so, those promises shall all of them be fulfilled to you: 'As thy days, so shall thy strength be.' 'God will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able: but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.' 'Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.' ‡

* Job 5 : 11 ; 22 : 29 ; Ps. 18 : 27 ; Prov. 29 : 23 ; Matt. 23 : 12 ; Luke 14 : 11 ; 18 : 14 ; James 4 : 10, etc. † Rev. 12 : 5.

‡ James 4 : 8 : Heb. 12 : 7, 8 ; Is. 63 : 9 ; Ps. 55 : 22 ; (LXX. *τὴν μέριμνάν σου ;*) Hos. 4 : 17 ; Deut. 33 : 25 ; 1 Cor. 10 : 13 ; Phil. 4 : 6, 7.

Lecture XXIX.

1 *PETER* 5 : 8–14.

'Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. To Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand. The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Marcus my son. Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity. Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen.'

In the previous verse the afflicted children of God had been encouraged to cast upon Him the whole burden of their anxiety, 'for,' says the Apostle, 'He careth for you.' But this assurance must not tempt them to be careless about themselves. Here we are taught, as always in Scripture, that the true tendency and the only legitimate use of Divine grace is not to supersede, but to stimulate and give effect to, human effort. Mark the sequence: '*He careth for you: Be sober, be vigilant*,' or *watchful*.* It is thus that promise and command are everywhere united; as in that frequent call to Israel of old, 'Go up; for I will deliver them into thine hand;' and its counterpart in the spiritual conflicts of faith: 'Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.'†

* γρηγορήσατε. Comp. *Lect. on Thess.* p. 306. This verb occurs 23 times in the New Testament, and, excepting here and 1 Thess. 5 : 10, *(wake,)* is always in our common version *to watch*. Rev. 3 : 2 has *watchful* for the participle.

† 1 Chron. 14 : 10; Judg. 20 : 28; Phil. 2 : 12, 13.

Twice before had the writer insisted on *sobriety*, as a condition, in the first instance, of a perfect Christian hope, and, in the second, of effectual prayer.* He now repeats the warning a third time with immediate reference to the exigencies of the Christian's warfare with Satan ; and for the same special reason he here adds to it a summons to *watchfulness*, the foe with whom the Church has to contend being no less assiduous and subtle, than he is malignant and powerful. '*Be sober, be watchful ; because*'—but that word is now generally omitted ;† simply then : '*Be sober, be watchful ; your adversary the devil*,‡ *as a roaring*§ *lion*'—continually impelled by rage and hunger—'*walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.*'

We have here an expression of that solemn sense of a great reality, which the sacred writers ever manifest in speaking of the presence and working of evil spirits. Of these 'principalities and powers, the world-rulers of this darkness,'‖ the chief is he who in Scripture is commonly distinguished by the name of *the Devil*—originally a Greek word meaning an *accuser*, or by that of *Satan*—a Hebrew word, meaning an *adversary ;* though the former is used by the Seventy for the latter.** He is also twice called *the Tempter.*†† All these

* See pp. 64 and 277.

† The ὅτι, bracketed by Hahn and Bloomfield, is cancelled by other recent editors on the authority of Sin.[1] A, B, and many cursive MSS. It is found, however, in the old versions, Syriac, Vulgate, etc.

‡ ὁ ἀντίδικος ὑμῶν διάβολος. Middleton : 'I believe the translation should in strictness be, "Your opposing evil spirit," as if ἀντίδικος had been an adjective ;' and this construction is followed by Hensler, (in his version ; for the commentary makes ἀντίδ. a substantive and διάβ. an adjective,=Wakefield *your slanderous adversary,)* Trollope, Bloomfield. With the last Peile agrees in claiming the article for διάβ., but would translate, *the Devil, your adversary ;* and the same arrangement appears in several French versions and Martini. Comp. Tit. 3 : 4, Greek and English. There can be no doubt that ordinary Greek grammar would justify some such alteration of our common version ; but the New Testament usage does by no means require it ; ἀντίδ. being always elsewhere a substantive, (Matt. 5 : 25 ; Luke 12 : 58 ; 18 : 3,) and διάβολος, as a proper name, wanting the article in Acts 13 : 10 ; Rev. 20 : 2.

§ ὠρυόμενος—in the New Testament only here.

‖ Eph. 6 : 12, (τοὺς κοσμοκράτορας τοῦ σκότους τούτου,) Rev. 20 : 2.

** 1 Chron. 21 : 1 ; Job 1 : 6, 12 ; 2 : 1 ; Ps. 109 : 6 ; Zech. 3 : 1, 2.

†† Matt. 4 : 3 ; 1 Thess. 3 : 5.

names are significant of his spirit and relations to the human race, and to the Church of the Redeemer. Wholly evil himself, and choosing evil for his good, he strives unrelentingly to involve others in his own sin and ruin. He worketh in the children of disobedience, leading them captive at his will, and shutting out, if possible, from their minds every ray of saving truth. Or, where the light of life has shined, his aim is still to quench it by the suggestions of unbelief, or in the storms of persecution.*

It is especially in regard to this last form of his operation that the writer seeks here to put his brethren on their guard against Satan's devices, (2 Cor. 2 : 11.) In that age the devil 'had great wrath.' The Babe of Bethlehem, having gloriously foiled every assault alike of his guile and his fury, had gone up far beyond his reach, and now he turned to seek his revenge on the bereaved and apparently defenceless disciples. Having, as in the days of Job, the range of the whole earth, his 'mountain of prey,' (Ps. 76 : 4,) he '*walked about, as a roaring lion*'—restless and bloodthirsty—'*seeking whom he might devour*,' literally *drink down*, or, as we rather say, *drink* or *swallow up*.† Busily plying all the enginery of hell, he entered likewise into the Sanhedrim and the synagogue—into the temples of the heathen, and the schools of philosophy, and the palace of Cæsar—and everywhere mustered to his aid the resources of earthly empire. What hope, then, was there left for the feeble 'flock of God' (v. 2)?

'*Be sober, be watchful*,' says Peter; *sober* in the use of, and in your expectations from, this present world; *watchful*, lest from the actual severities of your lot 'Satan should get an advantage of you,'‡ by agitating your minds with fear, and doubt, and distrust of your heavenly Guardian, and thus ensnare you into the concealment or abandonment of your Christian profession.

* Eph. 2 : 2; 2 Tim. 2 : 26; Matt. 13 : 19; 2 Cor. 4 : 4; 1 Thess. 3 : 5; Rev. 12 : 12, etc. Comp. *Lect. on Thess.* pp. 155–6, 161, 177.

† τίνα καταπίῃ, (Lachmann reads τινὰ καταπιεῖν, [B, J, Sin.^{2}—Sin.^{1} τινὰ καταπῖν,] *to devour some one.*) The word occurs in Matt. 23 : 24; 1 Cor. 15 : 54; 2 Cor. 2 : 7; 5 : 4; Heb. 11 : 29; Rev. 12 : 16.

‡ 2 Cor. 2 : 11.

Their own best efforts, however, they must remember, depended for their validity and success in so great a contest on the firmness and stability which faith alone can give. It is therefore added, '*Whom resist steadfast in the faith*,' the principle of faith—that faith of God's elect, which is itself the victory that overcometh the world—faith in God and in Christ, and in the glorious Gospel, and in the things unseen and eternal which that Gospel reveals. Well does Satan know, in all his attempts upon the Church, where lies 'the glory of her strength,' and that, whatever partial triumphs he may seem to win, he cannot really prevail against her, or against the humblest soul within her pale, except by subverting this 'pillar and ground' of her confidence. Indirect and circuitous as his approaches may be, and for the most part are, it is still faith that he ultimately aims at, and, thanks to the secret supply of Christ's inexhaustible grace, it is faith also by which he is continually baffled. With the shield of faith, though with that alone, the Christian is able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, and the promise is made good which we find in that section of James's Epistle, (4 : 6–10,) which has so much in common with the present context: 'Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.'*

That we have rightly understood our Apostle here, as regarding chiefly the spiritual perils to which his brethren were exposed from their grievous outward trials, is clear from the latter half of the verse: '*knowing*'—and the consideration may well help to steady faith in bearing the cross—'*that the same sufferings are being accomplished*,' that is, are in the process of accomplishment, '*for*,' or '*on, your brotherhood in the world*.'† It was a time of general trial for the people of

* Tit. 1 : 1 ; 1 John 5 : 4 ; Ps. 89 : 17 ; 1 Tim. 3 : 15 ; Luke 22 : 31–2 ; 1 Thess. 3 : 5, (comp. *Lectures*, etc., p. 178 ;) Eph. 6 : 16. Comp. also p. 32.

† *τὰ αὐτὰ τῶν παθημάτων* (the phrase is peculiar and perhaps without example ; somewhat as if we should say : *the samenesses of the sufferings*. *πάθημα* is so rendered ch. 1 : 11 ; 4 : 13 ; and generally elsewhere) *τῇ ἐν* (Sin. inserts *τῷ*) *κόσμῳ ὑμῶν ἀδελφότητι* (as in ch. 2 : 17) *ἐπιτελεῖσθαι*, (in the New Testament only here.) The primary and most obvious meaning of the verb yields a better sense than any other of the numerous interpretations it has here received, such as, *occur, befall*, (Syriac, Vulgate, Luther, Trollope, etc. ;) *are suffered, undergone*, (Beausobre and L'Enfant, Martini, Carpzov, Wahl, Robinson, etc. ;) *are discharged as a debt*,

God. Wherever Christians were found, they were either already involved in, or manifestly threatened by, the very same fight of afflictions. As the occasion of this universal suffering was the same, to wit, their loyalty to the one Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, so likewise was the source of it, in the hatred borne to them for Christ's sake by the world, and the world's god. This being the case throughout the length and breadth of the empire, and their brethren everywhere finding themselves sustained under the trial, there was the less reason why the scattered sojourners of Asia Minor should be surprised or offended, because they fared even as others. The true ground of alarm would have been, that they fared differently. Moreover, the world-wide brotherhood having an absolute corporate oneness, the sufferings of the several members were really a common stock. The believers of one country suffered, not apart, nor in their own persons only, but with and in their brethren elsewhere; and reciprocally these brethren suffered with and in them. What Paul asserted of himself in relation to Christ (Col. 1 : 24) is true of all Christians in relation to one another: they fill up, each in his own flesh, that which is behind of the affliction of all. And for all parties there is strength and consolation in the thought. 'It is,' says Calvin, 'a perilous temptation of Satan, when he seeks to sever us from the body of Christ. We have heard in what way he tried to beat down the spirit of Job, (5 : 1 :) Look to the saints, whether any one of them ever suffered such things. Here, on the contrary, we are admonished by the Apostle, that nothing happens to us, but what may be seen in the other members of the Church. By no means are we to refuse partnership, or a like fortune, with all saints.'* And to the same

(Steiger;) *are gone through with as a matter of duty*, (Bloomfield;) *are imposed*, (Huther.) Of course, the relation expressed by the dative ἀδελφότητι depends a good deal on the meaning of ἐπιτελεῖσθαι. Many take it for a dative of the personal agent after a passive verb, *by the brotherhood*. But this construction is not common in the New Testament. The Syriac=Luther *über*, Benson, *upon*, etc.

* 'Periculose nos tentat Satan, quum a Christi corpore nos separat. Audivimus qualiter animum Job percellere conatus sit, Respice ad sanctos, an ullus eorum tale aliquid passus sit. E converso hic Apostolus nos monet, nihil nobis accidere, quod non in reliquis Ecclesiæ membris cernamus. Porro minime recusanda nobis est cum sanctis omnibus societas, vel similis conditio.'

purpose a Roman Catholic divine writes thus: 'The round of the Church's sufferings and patience is made up of the sufferings and patience of individual believers, her children and members; and therefore should every believer feel himself emboldened to suffering by the thought, that he is thus completing and perfecting, not his own crown merely, but that also of the whole Church.'*

And the phrase suggests still another ground of consolation. These sufferings '*are being accomplished.*' They shall not last for ever. The sum of them is fixed, and they have an appointed end. How large a proportion of the whole has been exhausted by these eighteen centuries of conflict and sorrow! And now every pang of the Church—every tear of the obscurest of her children—is so much taken from what still remains.

To the various exhortations of this section, and, as we may say, of the whole Epistle, is then added prayer for the Divine blessing, or perhaps rather, as most think, an authoritative assurance of the same. For the 10th verse, as now generally read, might be rendered thus: '*But*'—to conclude; and for your encouragement in the strenuous performance of every duty, however arduous, and in the patient endurance of every trial, however painful—'*the God of all grace, who,*' in the day of conversion, '*called*† *us unto His eternal glory in*‡ *Christ Jesus, after we have suffered a while*'—or, *who called you unto His eternal glory in Christ Jesus, after ye have suffered a while*§—'*will himself perfect you, establish, strengthen, settle.*'‖

* Corn. a Lapide: 'Perficitur enim cyclus passionum et patientiæ Ecclesiæ ex passionibus et patientia singulorum fidelium, ejus filiorum et membrorum, ac proinde quisque fidelis ad passionem animare se debet, cogitando se non tantum suam, sed et totius Ecclesiæ coronam adimplere et perficere.'

† ὁ καλέσας—as in ch. 1 : 15. See p. 67. ‡ ἐν.

§ For ἡμᾶς, Beza, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford, with the approval of De Wette, Huther, Wiesinger, Brown, etc., read ὑμᾶς, (Sin. A, B, G,) and on this pronoun, whichever reading is adopted, παθόντας depends. It may be noted that the Syriac employs pronouns of the first person throughout, and that Sin. omits Ἰησοῦ.

‖ The reading καταρτίσει, (Sin. A, B, Vulgate,) marked as of very great value by Griesbach, is adopted by Bengel and the later editors generally, though not, as Bloomfield supposes, by Scholz. The latter, however, concurs with the rest

He '*will perfect you*,' so that no defect may be left behind* —'*establish*,' so that nothing may shake you†—'*strengthen*,' that ye may overcome every opposing force ‡—'*settle*' on the foundation of the Lord which standeth sure for ever.§ 'An address,' says Bengel, worthy of *Peter*,' (the Rock.) 'He is strengthening his brethren.'‖ The multiplication of these emphatic words, to express the one general idea of our sanctification, denotes not merely the difficulty of the work and our need of God's special grace,** but the thoroughness also of the result. It is God's work, and His work is perfect, (Deut. 32 : 4.) He '*Himself*'†† will do it, through the discipline of His providence, the instrumentality of His word, and the ordinances of His Church, His own grace rendering these means effectual unto salvation. The work is one eminently appropriate to His name and nature, as well as to the relation which He sustains to His people. He is '*the God of all grace*.' Numerous as are the streams, they all flow from His infinite fulness. The Holy Spirit Himself—'the Spirit of grace'—our Sanctifier and Comforter—proceedeth from the Father.‡‡ Great is the grace already shown to those who were children of condemnation and heirs of wrath, in '*calling them unto God's eternal glory in Christ Jesus*.' As God, the Caller, is in Christ, so it is into the like fellowship that we are called; and only as we too are thus in Christ, and by virtue of our union with Him, are we called unto God's eternal glory. Oh! how blessed are they, and how secure in their blessedness, whose eternal life is identified with God's eternal glory! He stands committed to their cause. The very call is itself a pledge that the inheritance shall be theirs, and that He will

in reading στηρίξει, σθενώσει, in the New Testament only here,) θεμελιώσει (Sin., etc.) The last word is cancelled by Lachmann on the authority of A, B, Syriac and Vulgate.

* Bengel: 'ne remaneat in vobis *defectus*.'

† Id.: 'ne quid vos labefactet.'

‡ Id.: 'ut superetis vim omnem adversam.'

§ 2 Tim. 2 : 19, (ὁ μέντοι στερεὸς θεμέλιος κτλ.)

‖ 'Digna *Petro* oratio. Confirmat fratres suos.' ** Calvin.

†† αὐτός. Comp. 1 Thess. 3 : 11 and 5 : 23.

‡‡ Heb. 10 : 29; John 15 : 26.

make them meet for its possession. 'Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it.'*

All this marvellous grace, however, we are gently reminded, does not exclude present suffering: '*after ye have suffered a while—a little while.*' † This clause our translators connect with the latter half of the verse, which, since the suffering lasts all through this life, must then be understood as describing the final act of grace, whereby believers are made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory.‡ But there is little doubt that the true connection is, according to the now prevailing construction, with what precedes. God '*called you unto His eternal glory, after ye have suffered a little while.*' The suffering is first, and then comes the glory; and both—the one no less than the other—were distinctly regarded in your 'high calling of God in Christ Jesus.' § Let not, then, your faith and hope be at all disconcerted by that, which is in no degree a derangement of the divine plan, and which, so far from frustrating, must rather hasten the consummation of, the purposes of grace.‖

No sooner does the Apostle again reach this point, whence is seen in the perspective of eternity the glorious fruit of the Divine love, and of the Church's present trial, than again He bursts forth into doxology: '*To Him the glory and the power*'—the glory of the great result, and the power that surely brings it to pass—'*for ever and ever*'—*unto the ages of the ages.* '*Amen.*' **

And with this the body of the Epistle may be said to terminate; what follows being made up, besides a statement of

* 1 Thess. 5 : 24; 2 Cor. 5 : 19; Heb. 1 : 1; 1 Cor. 7 : 22, etc.

† *ὀλίγον*—as in ch. 1 : 6. See p. 42.

‡ Of the many who have construed *παθόντας* with the *ὑμᾶς* following, some (Syriac, Luther, Beausobre, and L'Enfant, Semler, etc.) give it the force of a present,=*while you are suffering*. But this will not do. And no less arbitrary is Benson's assumption, that these brethren 'were to be delivered from their sufferings before death.'

§ Phil. 3 : 14.

‖ On this verse comp. *Lect. on Thess.* pp. 199–201 and 396–402.

** *αὐτῷ ἡ δόξα, καὶ τὸ κράτος εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων. ἀμήν.* The words *ἡ δόξα καί* are cancelled by Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford, (A, B, and the Amiatine Vulgate.) Tischendorf also cancels *τῶν αἰώνων*, after B.—Comp. ch. 4 : 11, (p. 285.)

the design and purport of the Epistle itself, of certain circumstantial notices, and the customary apostolic greetings and benediction.

'*I have written briefly*, or *in few words*,* says Peter, '*exhorting*' you to perseverance in your Christian course, and *comforting*† you in your many sorrows, '*and*' this chiefly by '*testifying*'—solemnly *attesting*,‡ as an Apostle of Christ—'*that this is the true grace of God*'—this, namely, *into which* you entered at the beginning, and '*wherein ye*' now '*stand*.'§ These churches, as we have had occasion to remark more than once,‖ were probably founded, not by Peter, but by Paul, or by disciples of Paul. For the faith which they then embraced they had since suffered and were still suffering much, and were likely to suffer more, and there was danger that the heart of the people might be discouraged. It was therefore important that another Apostle, and one so eminent as Peter, should come forward at this late period to reinvigorate their confidence, by certifying that the doctrine they had formerly been taught, and the hopes which it had led them to cherish, were indeed of God, and the common portion of His children.

Some, however, read the last word so as to make it a general exhortation to steadfastness; and then the whole would take this turn: '*This*,' of which I have been writing, '*is the true grace of God; in which*' grace see that ye '*stand*.'**

But why should Peter have written, or say that he had written, '*in few words*'? Not, as has been suggested, from

* *δι ὀλίγων*. Comp. Eph. 3 : 3, *ἐν ὀλίγῳ*, and Heb. 13 : 22, *διὰ βραχέων*.

† *παρακαλῶν*.

‡ *ἐπιμαρτυρῶν*—in the New Testament only here. Bengel, Scott, and Peile, explain the *ἐπί* as cumulative, Peter intending to *add* his testimony to that of the earlier teachers; Macknight and Clarke make it intensive, *strongly, earnestly;* Wiesinger and Alford think it simply marks the direction of the testimony.

§ *εἰς ἣν ἑστήκατε*, (Sin. A, B: *στῆτε*, which Lachmann edits.) Comp. Rom. 5 : 2, *ἐν ᾗ ἑστήκαμεν*. Here, by a not uncommon breviloquence, *εἰς ἣν* combines the ideas of entrance into, and abiding in. Comp. *Lect. on Thess.* p. 512, and Winer, pp. 368, etc. Sin.[1] inserts *καί* before *ταύτην*.

‖ See pp. 24, 52, 88.

** *στῆτε*, (A, B.) So Lachmann, Huther, Brown, Alford.

modesty,* nor lest the reading of a longer letter might prove irksome,† nor because the letter would appear a short one to the readers, as coming from one of their best friends, and on the weightiest subject,‡ but simply because, from the very nature of the case as here presented, many words were not needed. It is true, the letter is rather longer than most. Still the words were few, when compared with the importance of the matter, and the strong interest felt by the writer in his brethren's welfare. Moreover, what might seem to be wanting in this respect would be supplied by the messenger by whom the letter was sent.§

Observe, also, how agreeable to the main purpose of the letter, as just explained, was the selection of that messenger. '*By Silvanus*'—so he is called in the Epistles, but in the Acts *Silas*. For these are but two forms of one name, and it is natural to suppose that they stand for one and the same person. If so, this was no other than the prophet, and leading man in the church of Jerusalem, whom Paul chose for his companion and fellow-laborer, and of whom he makes honorable mention in three of his Epistles.‖ Under what circumstances, or on what errand, he had now been with Peter, we are not told. But it would appear that his own special field of ministry lay in that same Asia Minor, through which he had travelled with the Apostle of the Gentiles: '*a faithful brother unto you*,' or, as the words stand in the original, '*to you the faithful brother*,'** all that is implied in such a designation. Nor by adding the words, '*as I suppose*,' or rather, *as I reckon, conclude, judge*,†† does Peter mean to guard himself, or to ex-

* Estius: 'modestiæ causa.' † Horneius: 'ne molestum sit legere.'

‡ Beza.

§ For though διὰ Σιλ. ἔγραψα could mean that Peter had used Silvanus as his amanuensis, the other interpretation is the more probable.

‖ Acts 15 : 22, 32, 40; 1 Thess. 1 : 1; 2 Thess. 1 : 1; 2 Cor. 1 : 19.

** ὑμῖν τοῦ πιστοῦ ἀδελφοῦ. Comp. Col. 1 : 1, Τιμόθεος ὁ ἀδελφός.—Burton and Peile explain ὑμῖν as a dative of judgment,=*whom you account;* and very many, from the Syriac and Vulgate to Alford, connect it with ἔγραψα. But the construction of our common version is quite defensible. Alford's objection, that it 'is harsh, and leaves ἔγραψα without any object of address,' is sufficiently obviated by the position of ἔγραψαbet ween διὰ Σιλουανοῦ and the explanatory participles.—Lachmann cancels the τοῦ.

†† ὡς λογίζομαι. Comp. Rom. 3 : 28; 6 : 11; 8 : 18, etc. Camerarius: 'non

press the slightest doubt of the justness of the commendation. He merely intimates that what was, of course, already well known to them had pressed itself also on his own conviction, from all that he had now seen of Silvanus. Instead, therefore, of this being a troublesome addition,* as it has been called, it was really no small matter for Silvanus, or for those to whom he ministered, that his Christian character and special relation to them, should receive the emphatic indorsement of so great an Apostle.†

The 13th verse, you will notice, has an important word supplied. The Greek is something like this: '*She that is co-elect in Babylon saluteth you;*' ‡ that is, say some, Peter's own wife, § or some other distinguished Christian lady, ‖ whose name, it has even been fancied, may have been the word that answers to our *co-elect, Syneclecte.*** But it is difficult on this hypothesis to conceive why the words, '*that is in Babylon,*' should have entered into the designation. There is, in fact, no sufficient reason for quitting the common view, which appears, indeed, in the oldest manuscript,†† as well as in the oldest versions, that to the scattered sojourners, whom in the inscription of the Epistle he had addressed as 'elect,' he now at the close of it sends the salutation of some '*co-elect*' church,

dubitationem significat sed persuasionem.' This clause is connected with δι' ὀλίγων by the Syriac and Vulgate, Beza, Huther, and a few others; but with no advantage to the sense. Erasmus, Grotius, Pott, etc., assume that Peter alludes to a former letter sent, *he thinks=if he remembers rightly* (!), by Silvanus. But of the existence of any such letter, as the idiomatic, epistolary ἔγραψα is no proof at all, (comp. Philem. 19, 21,) so neither is there the slightest indication elsewhere; and see 2 Pet. 3 : 1 to the contrary. Finally, Wetstein and Moldenhawer connect with ἔγραψα; the former, thus: 'I have written as I think—that is my own deliberate conviction;' the latter, thus: 'I have written what I suppose your circumstances require;' and of these two views one is at least more tolerable than the other.

* Huther: 'ein störender Zusatz.'

† Calvin: 'tanti apostoli.'

‡ ἡ ἐν Βαβυλῶνι συνεκλεκτή, (the last word is found nowhere else.)

§ Mill, Bengel, Pott, Meyer, Mayerhoff, Jachmann, Alford.

‖ Wall, Heumann, Schirmer.

** Wolf throws this out as a possible conjecture, without at all adopting it, as Pott and Augusti say he does; for he insists on the common interpretation.

†† The *Codex Sinaiticus.*

within whose bounds he was residing at the time. And what church was that? '*She that is in Babylon.*'

Here, however, we encounter a still greater diversity of opinion. The Romans had a military station in Egypt, that was called Babylon, and that has been supposed to be the place here mentioned.* Others think that the name is used mystically for Jerusalem,† or Rome. The last is a very old opinion,‡ and is held likewise by many moderns, including nearly all Roman Catholic writers, who would thus succeed, though under a bad name, in getting New Testament evidence of Peter's connection with the imperial city. But certainly this apocalyptic disguise does not accord well with the simple tone of the context; and so here again I am disposed to acquiesce in what is now the more common view, that the place from which our Epistle was written was the Assyrian Babylon, which, though greatly reduced from its ancient extent and splendor, still existed in the apostolic age. There, and throughout those eastern regions, Jews abounded; and nothing is more likely, though we have no other record of the fact, than that the Apostle of the circumcision, in 'passing throughout all quarters,'§ travelled as far as the Euphrates.

To the salutation of the church is added that of an eminent minister now with Peter: '*and Marcus, my son.*' Such, indeed, as find in the beginning of the verse a reference to the Apostle's wife, naturally enough take this to have been their son. Otherwise the agreement is general, that Peter calls him his son merely as an expression of his affection, or perhaps also because, as his spiritual father, he had 'begotten him through the Gospel,'‖ and that this was really the famous John Mark, at the house of whose mother Peter seems to have been a frequent visitor,** and of whom ecclesiastical tradition asserts that, in the composition of the second Gospel, he acted as Peter's interpreter or secretary.††

Finally, the Apostle invites all to whom he wrote, when the

* Pearson, Calov, Clericus, etc. † Capellus, Spanheim, Semler, etc.
‡ Eusebius quotes for it Papias and the Alexandrian Clement.
§ Acts 9 : 32. ‖ 1 Cor. 4 : 15. ** Acts 12 : 12.
†† *ἑρμηνευτὴς Πέτρου.*

letter should be received and read among them, to '*salute one another*,' according to the oriental custom, adopted with a deeper and holier significance into the usages of the early Church, '*in a kiss of love*,'* that unfeigned, fervent, brotherly love, which again and again he has exhorted them to cherish.

And then comes the apostolic blessing, '*Peace to you all who are in Christ Jesus*,'† and so are one with the once suffering and now glorified Redeemer: '*Peace to you all*'—the very peace which He bequeathed to the disciples at His death, and sealed to them after His resurrection, when 'He breathed on them, and saith unto them: Receive ye the Holy Ghost.'‡ Solemn guarantee of the Church's inviolable life and present safety amid all her tribulations, and of her ultimate and eternal repose! '*Amen*.'§

* ἀσπάσεσθε (as in the previous verse) ἀλλήλους ἐν φιλήματι ἀγάπης—the φίλημα ἅγιον of other Epistles, (Rom. 16 : 16; 1 Cor. 16 : 20; 2 Cor. 13 : 12; 1 Thess. 5 : 26; comp. *Lectures*, etc., pp. 403–4.)

† εἰρήνη ὑμῖν πᾶσι τοῖς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ The last word is cancelled by Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford, (A, B. Syriac.)

‡ John 14 : 27; 20 : 22. Comp. *Lect. on Thess.* pp. 583–4.

§ The editors generally omit the ἀμήν, though it appears in the Syriac, and in the Vulgate as commonly printed, (not the *Cod. Amiatinus.*)

THE

FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER

TRANSLATED.

The First Epistle of Peter.

I. Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the elect sojourners of the dispersion of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, according to the foreknowledge of God the 2
Father, through* sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus 3
Christ, who according to His great mercy begat us again unto a living hope, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance incorruptible, 4
and undefiled, and unfading, reserved in the heavens for you, who in the power of God are guarded through faith 5
unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time: wherein ye exult, though now for a little while, if need be, 6
ye are grieved through† manifold temptations,‡ that the 7
proof of your faith, *being*§ much more precious than of gold‖ that perisheth, yet is proved by fire, may be found unto praise, and honor, and glory, at** the revelation of Jesus Christ; whom, not knowing,†† ye love; in whom, 8
though now ye see *Him* not, yet believing, ye exult with joy unspeakable and glorified, receiving the end of your 9
faith, the salvation of *your* souls. Concerning which sal- 10
vation prophets diligently inquired and searched, who prophesied concerning the grace for you; searching for 11

* Gr. *in.* † Gr. *in.* ‡ Or, *trials.*
§ Some thus: *may be found much more precious.* ‖ Or, as many, *than gold.*
** Gr. *in.* †† Or, as some read, *having not seen.*

what, or what manner of, time the Spirit of Christ in them was showing *and* testifying beforehand the sufferings *ap-*
12 *pointed* for Christ, and the glories after these: unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us* they were ministering those things, which have now been reported unto you by those who preached the Gospel unto you in† the Holy Spirit sent from heaven; into which things angels long to gaze.

13 Wherefore, girding up the loins of your mind, being sober, have your hope perfectly set on‡ the grace coming§
14 to you at‖ the revelation of Jesus Christ. As children of obedience, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts
15 in your ignorance, but according to the Holy One, who called you, be ye yourselves also holy in all *your* walk:
16 because it is written: Be ye holy, for I am holy. And if
17 ye call Him Father,** who without respect of persons judgeth according to every one's work, walk, during the
18 time of your sojourning, in fear: knowing that not with corruptible things, silver or gold, were ye redeemed from
19 your vain walk handed down from your fathers, but with the precious blood, as of a lamb faultless and spotless, of
20 Christ; foreknown, indeed, before the foundation of the
21 world, but manifested in the last times for you, who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead, and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope should be in God.

22 Having purified your souls in the obedience of the truth through the Spirit†† unto brotherly kindness unfeigned,
23 out of a pure heart love one another intensely; having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which liveth and
24 abideth for ever.‡‡ For all flesh *is* as grass, and all its glory as the flower of grass. Withered is the grass, and

* Some read *you*. † Some read *by*. ‡ Gr. *perfectly hope on*.
§ Gr. *being brought*. ‖ Gr. *in*.
** Or, as many, *call on Him* as *Father*.
†† Some omit the words, *through the Spirit*.
‡‡ Or, as many read, *God's living and abiding word*.

its flower is fallen off; but the word of the Lord abideth 25
for ever. Now, this is the word which in the Gospel was
preached unto you.

II. Laying aside, therefore, all malice, and all guile, and
hypocrisies, and envyings, and all evil-speakings, as new- 2
born babes, earnestly desire the rational,* guileless† milk,
that by it ye may grow unto salvation; if indeed ye have 3
tasted that the Lord *is* kind. Coming to whom, the living 4
Stone, by men, indeed, rejected, but with God elect, pre-
cious,‡ ye yourselves also, as living stones, are§ builded 5
a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual
sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Be- 6
cause it is contained in the Scripture: Behold, I lay in
Zion a chief-corner stone, elect, precious;‡ and he that
believeth on it‖ shall in no wise be ashamed. For you, 7
then *is* the preciousness,** who believe; but for such as
disobey, the stone which the builders rejected, the same
hath become the head of the corner, and a stone of stum- 8
bling, and a rock of offence; who stumble, disobeying the
word:†† whereunto they were also appointed. But ye *are* 9
an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people
for a possession; that ye may publish the excellencies‡‡
of Him who called you out of darkness into His wondrous
light; *who* once *were* not a people, but now *are* the people 10
of God; *who* had not received mercy, but now have re-
ceived mercy.

Beloved, I exhort *you*, as foreigners and sojourners, to 11
abstain§§ from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;
having your behavior good among the Gentiles, that, 12
wherein they speak against you, as evil-doers, they may,
from the good works *which* they behold,‖‖ glorify God in
the day of visitation.

* Or, *of the word.* † Many, *unadulterated.* ‡ Or, *honored.*
§ Or, *be ye.* ‖ Or, *Him.* ** Or, *honor.*
†† Or, as many, *stumbled at the word, disob.* ‡‡ Or, *virtues.*
§§ Or, as some read, *abstain.* ‖‖ Gr. *having beheld them.*

13 Submit* yourselves, therefore, to every human institu-
tion, for the Lord's sake; whether to the king, as su-
14 preme; or to governors, as sent by Him for the punish-
15 ment of evil-doers, but for the praise of well-doers. For
thus is the will of God, that doing well ye silence the ig-
16 norance of foolish men; as free, and not as having that†
freedom for a covering of wickedness, but as servants of
17 God. Honor all *men;* love the brotherhood; fear God;
honor the king.

18 Ye servants, submit yourselves, in all fear, to your mas-
ters, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the per-
19 verse: for this *is* an acceptable thing,‡ if for conscience
20 toward God one endureth griefs, suffering unjustly. For
what credit *is it*, if, when ye do wrong and are buffeted,
ye shall bear *it* patiently? but if, when ye do well and
suffer, ye shall bear *it* patiently, this is an acceptable thing‡
21 with God. For unto this were ye called: because Christ
also suffered for us, leaving you§ an example, that ye should
22 follow His footsteps: who did no sin, neither was guile
23 found in His mouth: who, when reviled, reviled not again;
when suffering, threatened not; but committed *Himself*‖
24 to Him that judgeth righteously: who Himself bare our
sins in His own body upon** the tree,†† that, dying to sins,
we might live to righteousness; by whose stripes ye were
25 healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but have now
returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

III. Likewise, ye wives, submit‡‡ yourselves to your
own husbands; that, even if some disobey the word, they
may without word be won by the behavior of the wives;
2 beholding your chaste behavior *joined* with§§ fear; whose
3 be, not the outward adorning of plaiting of hair, and wear-
4 ing of gold, or putting on of garments, but the hidden man
of the heart, in the incorruptibleness of the meek and quiet
5 spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For

* Gr. *submitting.* † Gr. *the.* ‡ Gr. *grace.*
§ Many read: *suffered for you, leaving you;* some: *suffered for us, leaving us.*
‖ Others supply *it*, or *His cause*, or *His wrongs*, or *His wrong-doers.*
** Many thus: *bore up our sins in His own body to*, etc.
†† Gr. *wood*, or *timber.* ‡‡ Gr. *submitting.* §§ Gr. *in.*

thus of old did the holy women also, who hoped in* God,
adorn themselves, submitting themselves to their own hus-
bands: as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: of 6
whom ye are become children, while doing well, and not
fearing any† terror.

Ye husbands, likewise, dwell‡ according to knowledge 7
with the female vessel as the weaker, yielding *them* honor,
as being also heirs with *them*§ of the grace of life; that
your prayers be not hindered.‖

But finally, *be* all likeminded, sympathizing, brotherly,** 8
tender-hearted, humble-minded;†† not rendering evil for 9
evil, or railing for railing; but, on the contrary, blessing;
knowing that unto this‡‡ ye were called, that ye should in-
herit blessing. For he that will love life, and see good 10
days, let him restrain his tongue from evil, and his lips
from speaking guile; let him turn away from evil, and do 11
good; let him seek peace, and pursue it. For the eyes of 12
the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears unto their
prayer; but the face of the Lord *is* upon those who do
evil things. And who *is* he that shall do evil to you, if ye 13
be imitators of that which is good?§§ But if even ye 14
should suffer for righteousness' sake, blessed *are ye.* But
fear not their fear, neither be troubled; but sanctify the 15
Lord God‖‖ in your hearts. Yet *be* ready always for an
answer to every one that asketh of you an account of the
hope that is in you, with*** meekness and fear: having a 16
good conscience; that, wherein they may speak against
you as evil-doers, they may be ashamed who traduce your
good behavior in Christ. For *it is* better that ye suffer, 17
if the will of God should *so* will, *in* doing well than *in* do-
ing evil: because Christ also suffered once on account of 18
sins, the Righteous for the unrighteous, that He might
bring us to God, being put to death, indeed, in the flesh,
but quickened in the spirit; in which He went and 19

* Gr. *upon.* † Or, *with any.* ‡ Gr. *dwelling.*
§ Some read, *heirs with* you. ‖ Some read, *cut off.*
** Gr.=*brother-loving.* †† Some have read, *kindly-minded.*
‡‡ Some read, *because unto this.* §§ Some: *of Him who is good.*
‖‖ Some read, *the Lord Christ.* *** Some read, *but with.*

20 preached* also to the spirits in prison, which sometime disobeyed, when the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing, in which few—
21 that is, eight—souls were saved through water; which in a like figure now saveth us also, *even* baptism—not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the stipulation† toward God of a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ; who is on the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject unto Him.

IV. Christ, then, having suffered for us in the flesh, do ye also arm yourselves with the same mind:‡ for he that
2 hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin: so as no longer to live§ the remaining time in the flesh to the
3 lusts of men, but to the will of God. For sufficient for us *is* the past time of life‖ to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, having walked in lasciviousness, lusts, wine-debauches, revels, carouses, and unlawful idolatries:
4 whereof they think strange, that ye run not with them into the same excess** of profligacy, speaking evil of you:
5 who shall render an account to Him that is ready to judge
6 the living and the dead. For to this end was the Gospel preached also to the dead, that they might be judged, indeed, according to men in the flesh, but should live according to God in the spirit.

7 But the end of all things is at hand: be prudent, there-
8 fore, and be sober, in order to†† prayer. ‡‡ But above §§ all things have‖‖ your love for one another intense; for love
9 shall*** cover a multitude of sins. *Be* hospitable to one
10 another without murmurings.††† According as each received a gift, minister ‡‡‡ the same to one another, as good

* Gr. *having gone, He preached.* † Others, *inquiring;* or, *request.*
‡ Or, *thought.* Some thus: *with this same thought, that,* etc.
§ Many thus: *that he should no longer live.*
‖ Some omit the words *for us* and *of life.*
** Gr. *outpouring.* Some: *mire, sink;* others: *laxness, softness.*
†† Very many: *watch unto.* ‡‡ Gr. *the prayers.* §§ Gr. *before.*
‖‖ Gr. *having.* *** Or, *will.* Many read, *covereth.*
††† Some read, *murmuring.* ‡‡‡ Gr. *ministering.*

stewards of the manifold grace of God: if any one speak- 11
eth, *let it be* as the oracles of God; if any one ministereth,
let it be as of the ability which God supplieth: that in all
God may be glorified through Jesus Christ; to whom is the
glory and the power for ever and ever.* Amen.

Beloved, think not strange of the burning among you, 12
occurring to you for a trial, as if a strange thing were hap-
pening unto you; but, according as ye share in the suffer- 13
ings of Christ, rejoice; that at † the revelation also of His
glory ye may rejoice, exulting. If ye are reproached for 14
the name of Christ, blessed *are ye;* for the Spirit of glory, ‡
even the *Spirit* of God, resteth upon you. On their part,
indeed, He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glori-
fied. For let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, 15
or an evil-doer, or as an intermeddler; but if as a Chris- 16
tian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God on
this behalf.§ For *it is* the time for the judgment to begin 17
from the house of God; but if first from us, what *shall be*
the end of those who disobey the gospel of God? And 18
if the righteous scarcely is saved, where shall the ungodly
and sinner appear? Wherefore, let those also who suffer 19
according to the will of God, commit their souls *to Him* in
well-doing, as to a faithful Creator.

V. The elders that are among you I exhort, who am a
fellow-elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and
also a partaker of the glory about to be revealed: tend the 2
flock which is among you, overseeing *it* not by constraint,
but willingly; nor for base gain, but of a ready mind;
nor as lording over the heritages, ‖ but becoming patterns 3
to ** the flock; and when the chief Shepherd is mani- 4
fested, ye shall receive the unfading crown of glory.

Likewise, *ye* younger, submit yourselves unto *your* 5
elders; nay, all submitting †† to one another, gird on hu-
mility; for God resisteth ‡‡ the proud, but to the humble

* Gr. *unto the ages of the ages.*
‡ Some add the words, *and of power.*
‖ Some: *lots*, or *portions.*
†† Some omit the word *submitting.*
† Gr. *in.*
§ Gr. *in this particular.*
** Gr. *of.*
‡‡ Gr. *arrayeth Himself against.*

6 He giveth grace. Humble yourselves, therefore, under
the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due
7 time: casting all your anxiety upon Him, for He careth
for you.
8 Be sober, be watchful; because* your adversary, the
devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he
9 may devour: whom resist, steadfast in the faith,† know-
ing that the same sufferings are being accomplished on‡
your brotherhood in the world.

10 But may the God of all grace, who called us§ unto His
eternal glory in Christ Jesus, after we‖ have suffered a
little while, Himself perfect you, establish, strengthen,
11 settle.** To Him the glory and the power for ever and
ever.†† Amen.

12 By Silvanus, to you the faithful brother, as I reckon, I
have written‡‡ in few *words*, exhorting and attesting that
13 this is the true grace of God, wherein ye stand. She that
is co-elect in Babylon saluteth you; and Mark, my son.
14 Salute one another with a kiss of love. Peace to you all
who are in Christ Jesus. Amen.§§

* Most omit the word *because*.
† Some read, *by faith*.
‡ Or, *for*.
§ Or, as many read, *you*.
‖ Or, as many, *ye*.
** Most read, *But the God of all grace . . . will perfect*, etc.
†† Gr. *unto the ages of the ages*.
‡‡ Many thus: *By Silvanus, the faithful*, etc., *I have written to you*.
§§ Most omit the word *Amen*.

LECTURES

ON THE

SECOND EPISTLE OF PETER.

Introduction.

The Second Epistle of Peter seems to have been written very soon after the First, and was primarily intended for the same parties—the churches, namely, of Asia Minor. As both Epistles are expressly directed to the establishment and furtherance of the disciples in the faith and holiness of the Gospel, so both set out with a glowing description of their present high spiritual standing and privileges, as the basis of all the subsequent exhortations. In the present case, however, these exhortations are more of a general type throughout, avoiding altogether such details of civil, social, domestic, and ecclesiastical duty as occupy so large a portion of the previous communication. And another point of difference no less striking is this, that, whereas in the former Epistle the writer's great aim was to strengthen and comfort his brethren amidst the sufferings to which they were exposed from the misapprehensions and calumnies and violent assaults of the world around, he now lifts his voice, as it were for the last time, and with the grave earnestness of a dying testimony, to warn and confirm them against a still worse peril from within the Christian communion itself.

Already in the apostolic age the parable of the wheat and the tares, in which the Lord had foretold the presence and continuous growth of evil in His Church, received ample illustration in manifold corruptions both of doctrine and life. Of these the two teeming sources were, on the one hand, the spirit of Jewish legalism and superstition, and, on the other, the heathen philosophy, fanaticism, and licentiousness—the latter, of course, especially manifesting itself wherever, as in

Asia Minor, the Gentile element predominated. As early as the date of his Epistles to the Thessalonians, the eye of Paul discerned working in Christendom the nascent energies of that mystery of iniquity, which was to reach at once its maturity and its doom in the day of the Lord's appearing. And in several of the later writings of the New Testament—of those in particular which have to do more or less directly with the very region to which Peter immediately sent his letters—as, for example, the Epistles to the Ephesians, Colossians, and Timothy, the Epistle of Jude, and the Apocalyptic Epistles to the seven Churches, as well as that which now lies before us, it is by no means difficult to trace rudimentary indications and lineaments of what was in the next century rapidly developed into the monstrous, shapeless proportions of the Gnostic heresy, so called from the pretensions of its votaries to the possession of a superior *gnosis* or knowledge, though it was one which Paul denounced as utterly unworthy of the name. (1 Tim. 6 : 20.)

Now, it is curious enough that, for the principal author of this widespread and most formidable antagonism to the truth and purity of the Divine revelation, ecclesiastical tradition points steadily to that same Simon Magus whom our Apostle so sternly confronted in Samaria; as indeed 'the blasting volleyed thunder' of our second chapter may well remind us of the anathema with which Peter on that occasion smote the presumptuous blasphemer.

But the evil did not die out with those first centuries. Some of the more hideous features even of the old Gnosticism are reappearing in our own day. And we find, accordingly, that still a third characteristic of the present Epistle is the precision and reach of its prophetic spirit. As to Paul in writing to Timothy, so here to Peter it was clearly revealed, that throughout this entire dispensation 'evil men and seducers should wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived,' (2 Tim. 3 : 13,) till in the last times their folly and wickedness should culminate in open mockery of the Church's hope of the coming and kingdom of her Lord.

In opposition to all which heretical depravity the aged Apostle, besides drawing its terrible portrait, and foretelling

its more terrible overthrow, contents himself with calmly re-asserting the truth and certainty of what he had formerly taught his brethren on these vital themes, confirmed as that had been in his own experience by what he had seen and heard on the mount of transfiguration; only for their yet greater assurance he refers them also to the concurrent testimony of Prophets and Apostles, and especially of him to whose authority the errorists sometimes affected to appeal, the great Apostle of the Gentiles.

At the last, and now in full, unobstructed view of the 'new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness,' the writer summons his fellow-believers to the study of holiness without which no man shall enter there, and ends by turning into exhortation the benediction with which he had begun: 'But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.'

LECTURE I.

2 *PETER* 1 : 1, 2.

'SIMON PETER, a servant and an Apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.'

WITH the fulness and particularity of a last will and testament the writer announces himself by the double name, that recalled the two great divisions of his life: '*Simon*'—or according to the Jewish form which he seems here to have used, as James also used it in the Council of Jerusalem, *Symeon**—'*Peter, a servant and an Apostle of Jesus Christ.*'

He was '*a servant of Jesus Christ*' in the same sense in which all ministers, and all Christians, are Christ's servants. Not only did he revere the dignity of His person and the holiness of His character. Not only did He admire Him as the greatest Teacher of moral and spiritual truth that had ever appeared amongst men. Not only did he love Him as his own personal Friend and Saviour. He at the same time called that Saviour 'Master and Lord.' The impetuous self-will wherewith he used to 'gird himself, and walk whither he would,' had long been subdued, and now he gloried only in this, that he was 'not his own, but bought with a price'—the bond-servant of One who had died on a cross.† Gladly he recognized Christ's absolute authority over him, and his own obligation to an obedience as absolute. He was '*a servant of*

* Συμεών, (שִׁמְעוֹן,) Acts 15 : 14. Lachmann alone here edits Σίμων, (B.)

† John 13 : 13; 21 : 18; 1 Cor. 6 : 19, 20.

Jesus Christ' in the very sense in which Moses was 'the servant of God,' or as Paul and James sometimes prefixed this latter designation to their Epistles.* In other words, Peter knew that the Master he served was Divine. Like Thomas when permitted to behold and handle the sacred person of the Redeemer, so Peter too called Jesus 'Lord,' only because out of a full and adoring heart he could add, 'My God.'†

Such being the general relation in which Peter stood to Jesus Christ, his other title represents the particular service in which he was employed in that relation. He was '*an Apostle of Jesus Christ*'—one of those who, having companied with the Lord from the beginning, and seen Him after His resurrection, were by him endowed with special gifts of the Holy Ghost, and sent forth as witnesses of that great victory over sin and death to evangelize the nations, and for the planting and training of the Church.‡ It is to be observed, however, that, while claiming to be one of these, he does not claim the slightest official superiority to his brethren. Peter was 'an Apostle'—certainly one of 'the very chiefest Apostles'; § but he was no Pope.

From ch. 3 : 1 it appears that the letter was intended in the first instance for the same parties as those to whom the previous Epistle was addressed—the churches, namely, of the Lesser Asia. Here, however, they are designated, not according to the places of their residence, but according to the gracious attainment that was common to them with their brethren throughout the world. In the strictest sense of the word, therefore, the present is a Catholic Epistle—one not designed, even by the writer, to meet any merely local or temporary necessity, but now, as in the beginning, and in every intervening age, lifting up in the hearing of universal Christendom an authoritative voice of warning and exhortation, never more seasonable, never more needed, than at this very day. Being dead, Peter still speaks directly, and as though he were yet with us, to believers everywhere, or, according to his own instructive description of them, '*to them*

* 1 Chron. 6 : 49; Tit. 1 : 1; James 1 : 1.
† John 20 : 28.
‡ See p. 14.
§ 2 Cor. 11 : 5; 12 : 11.

that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.'

By *faith* we commonly understand one of two things; either the objective faith, what Paul calls 'the word of faith'—the system, that is, of revealed truth—as when we read of 'a great company of the priests becoming obedient to the faith;' or the subjective faith, the faith of the word, that act of the soul, whereby the truth is savingly apprehended, as when a man is said to be 'justified by faith.'* Now, very many† take the expression here in the former sense, but, I think, mistakenly—at least, too exclusively. It presently recurs in the fifth verse, and there it confessedly bears the second meaning, the belief of the truth being made the ground or starting-point of the practical counsels that follow, just because it had been already here assumed to be the characteristic of those addressed. Indeed, the whole Epistle shows clearly enough that the writer was speaking to such as had not only heard the Gospel, but were supposed to have yielded themselves to its control.

And their faith, he says, was '*precious*.' It was so as having God for its Author, as being one of His choicest gifts, and the immediate fruit of His Spirit's regenerating power, working through the external word. Of this thought there is even a direct suggestion in the text. The word‡ rendered '*have obtained*' is the same that we find in Luke 1 : 9, '*his lot was* to burn incense,' and again in John 19 : 24, '*let us cast lots* for it, whose it shall be;' so that by the mere use of this term the readers were to be reminded that, if they had really believed to the saving of their souls, they were indebted for their faith, not at all to their own superior sagacity, but solely to the allotments of grace. It had been with them as with Peter himself; a revelation had been made to them, not by flesh and blood, but by the Father of lights.§ In the dispensation of His favors, that was a blessed portion that had fallen to their share. Whatever else had been withheld, at least

* Rom. 10 : 8; Acts 6 : 7; Rom. 3 : 28.

† Huther, Robinson, Alford, etc.

‡ λαχοῦσι.

§ Heb. 10 : 39.—Bengel: 'non ipsi sibi pararunt.'—Matt. 10 : 17.

this highest distinction had been accorded to them—the 'faith of God's elect.' *

That faith is precious also for the clear, soul-satisfying light it sheds on all matters of profoundest interest—God, providence, duty, sin, pardon, the renewing and perfecting of our nature, the world's future, eternity; while for the supply of our manifold and urgent needs throughout this pilgrimage of life and death—daily bread, spiritual strength, guidance, consolation—it leans securely on the 'exceeding great and precious promises,' (v. 4.) Uniting to Christ, it reconciles to God, justifies the ungodly, crucifies every evil tendency, draws down the influences of the Divine Spirit and the guardianship of angels, and in the midst of all discouragements and weaknesses, still clings fast to One mighty to save, and says: I will not fear. It is thus at once the victory that overcometh the world, and the badge of citizenship in a better country, that is, a heavenly.†

But these things being true of faith in one instance are true in all, wherever and in so far as faith exists. Among the children of God there is but 'one faith,' even as the object of faith, Jesus Christ and the truth in Him, is one and unchangeable—'the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever'—and equally precious to all believers. ‡ Therefore it is that, not intending certainly to exclude any Christian or class of Christians, however imperfect either in knowledge or holiness, or however differing from their brethren in private views and prejudices, but for the very purpose of expressly embracing all Christians and all classes of Christians, Peter writes '*to them that have obtained like precious faith with us*'—faith equally precious, equally honored, § having equal rights and privileges in the kingdom of God, with our own.

And there, it has been thought, ‖ he speaks simply as a Christian: 'like precious faith with us Christians;' but in that case the '*us*' would comprehend the parties addressed, and there would be no room for a comparison in respect of faith. It is much better to understand him as saying, 'like

* Tit. 1 : 1. † Is. 63 : 1; Ps. 46 : 2; 1 John 5 : 4; Héb. 11 : 16.
‡ Eph. 4 : 5; Heb. 13 : 8: 1 Pet. 2 : 7. § *ἰσοτιμον*. ‖ De Wette.

precious faith with me the writer of this letter,' or, 'with us Apostles.'* The sequel of the chapter, we shall find, furnishes other examples of this way of referring to the individual, or else the apostolic experience, (vs. 16, 18.) But perhaps the best explanation is that which supposes Peter to be glancing, as he had done again and again in the First Epistle, (ch. 1 : 2 ; 2 : 4–10,) at the old national distinction of Jew and Gentile: 'like precious faith with that of us Jewish Christians.'† And then we at once think of the time, when 'they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost;' and of Peter's own repeated assertion of that miracle of the Divine mercy in the presence of his Jewish brethren.‡

But what is meant by this 'like precious faith' having been 'obtained *through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*'? To say that '*righteousness*' here stands for goodness,§ or grace and love, ‖ or faithfulness to promises,** has the look of merely evading a difficulty; and it is even worse to suppose that the term expresses the Divine impartiality in dispensing the blessings of redemption,†† as if it were an unrighteous thing in God to withhold from some what He might justly withhold from all. Equally unsatisfactory is it to understand the phrase of the personal righteousness of believers, wrought in them through the Divine agency,‡‡ as the accompaniment and fruit of faith.

The simplest and, I believe, the only correct interpretation is that which regards the word as bearing very much the same meaning that it so often has in Paul's Epistles, when used to denote, not any essential attribute of the Divine nature, nor yet an inherent quality of human character and works, but that wondrous righteousness, provided by '*our*

* Calvin, Bengel, Wolf, Brückner, Fronmüller.

† Nic. de Lyra, Barnes, Dietlein, Huther, Besser, Alford, Wordsworth, Wiesinger, etc.

‡ Acts 10 : 45, 47 ; 11 : 17 ; 15 : 9, 11. § Pott. ‖ De Wette.

** Beza, Piscator, Grotius. †† Huther, Augusti, Jachmann, Alford.

‡‡ Bede, Brückner.

Saviour Jesus Christ,' which the Gospel brings near to men as the gift of '*God*'—revealing it from faith to faith—whereby God is just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.*

Now it may indeed be said that faith is '*through*' this righteousness, inasmuch as, had there been no such righteousness, there could have been no revelation of it, and consequently no faith. But the original, it seems to me, represents the righteousness rather as the object of faith than as its source or medium, the exact translation being, 'have obtained like precious faith with us *in* † the righteousness'—in the Divine economy of human salvation, and especially in its method of, not merely manifesting the righteousness of God, but of bringing in the sinner righteous before Him. I cannot but think that, by overlooking this the most natural and obvious interpretation of the clause, commentators have involved themselves in much needless difficulty. If one Apostle might speak, as Paul does at Rom. 3 : 25, of 'faith in the blood' of Christ, there can be no reason why another Apostle should not speak of 'faith in the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.' ‡

Or, as you have it in the margin, '*of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ*.' And, in connecting the word 'our' with '*God*,' this is unquestionably the more accurate rendering. The only doubt is, whether the writer meant to say, '*of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ*,' § or, '*of our God and of the Saviour Jesus Christ;* in other words, whether Jesus Christ is here spoken of as being Himself at once our God and Saviour, or whether there are two subjects mentioned, God the Father and the Saviour Jesus Christ. This question is one that cannot be demonstratively determined, just because either construction is grammatically allowable. In favor of the second view is the manifest distinction of subjects in the second

* Is. 46 : 13; Rom. 1 : 17; 3 : 26.—Horneius: 'justitia Dei dicitur, quam Deus nobis dat et Christus peperit.'

† *ἐν*. Sin reads: *εἰς δικαιοσύνην*.

‡ Tyndale: 'faith in the righteousness that cometh of, etc.' Gerhard, Bengel, Scholefield, etc.

§ The older English versions, Beza, Bengel, Scholefield, and many others.

verse, while the other is sustained by the ordinary usage of the language, and by Peter's own verbal arrangement in a precisely similar case, and in this very Epistle, where three several times he uses the formula, 'our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.'* All that we shall say, therefore, is that, although the matter is not so clear as necessarily to silence the gainsayer, or to justify us in resting on such texts as the present the great doctrine of the Saviour's true Godhead, we are yet none the less certain that the application of the common rule to these texts would be just as accordant with Peter's manner of speech, as with his creed and profoundest religious life.

Having thus solemnly introduced himself to his readers, and described their spiritual standing in such catholic terms as embrace all Christian people, the writer adds his apostolic benediction, using the same words as in the First Epistle, but with a significant addition suggested by the circumstances of the time, and appropriate to the special design of the present letter: '*Grace unto you* † *and peace be multiplied through the knowledge of God and of Jesus* ‡ *our Lord.*'

It has often been noticed, what stress is laid in this Epistle on knowledge, § or true, full knowledge ‖—for occasionally, as here, an emphatic form of the word is used—as if the writer had his eye throughout on the false pretenders who claimed that as their peculiar distinction. The frequency also with which the Saviour is designated as 'our Lord' probably carries with it a similar allusion to those who 'despised government' or lordship, 'even denying the Lord that bought them.'**

Now, just as Scripture, when it speaks of not knowing God, implies in that whatever there is of dark and hopeless in the condition of the heathen or the unrenewed man,†† so to know

* V. 11; 2 : 20, (where Lachmann inserts ἡμῶν after κυρίου,) 3 : 18. In the present case likewise Sin. has κυρίου instead of θεοῦ.

† Χάρις ὑμῖν. ‡ After Ἰησοῦ, Sin adds Χριστοῦ.

§ See vv. 2, 3, 5, 6, 8; 2 : 20, 21; 3 : 18. ‖ γνῶσις—ἐπίγνωσις.

** 2 : 1, 10, (κυριότητος.) †† 1 Thess. 4 : 5, etc.

God is, in the scriptural force of the phrase, the sum of true religion. But God is thus savingly known only in and through Him who is at once the image of God, and His Word—'the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, and hath declared Him.' With a sublime simplicity are these first principles enunciated in that most wonderful address that, so far as is recorded, ever ascended from earth to heaven: 'And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.' And with no less distinctness, they lie at the foundation, and inform every utterance, of the apostolic teaching. To 'increase in the knowledge of God,' therefore, is to grow in all that is good and blessed.* And so, when Peter prays that '*grace and peace may be multiplied*' to the churches, he immediately adds as an essential condition of the fulfilment of the prayer, '*through*,' or rather *in*†—that is, they abiding and advancing in—'*the true knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.*' Thus, but only thus, would grace exceedingly abound, and their peace be as a river.‡

* 2 Cor. 4 : 4, (Col. 1 : 15;) John 1 : 1, 18; 17 : 3; Col. 1 : 10. † *ἐν.*
‡ 1 Tim. 1 : 14; Is. 48 : 18.—See *Lect. on Thess.* pp. 27, 28.

Lecture II.

2 *PETER* 1 : 3, 4.

'According as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the Divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.'

You may observe that the punctuation of our English version connects the third verse much more closely with what goes before than with what follows. But there is scarcely a doubt that this arrangement of the context, though it used to be the common one,* is erroneous. As in the former Epistle and the apostolic Epistles generally, the inscription and salutation stand by themselves in a brief and independent period, and then comes with a fresh start the formal opening of the subject of the letter. The true construction takes the next five verses together in one sentence, in which, according to the manner of the sacred writers, the exhibition contained in the third and fourth verses of the Divine power and liberality toward believers lays the foundation broad and sure for the hortatory urgency of the other three verses. In the present Lecture we shall confine ourselves to an inspection of that foundation.

'*According as*'—or rather *forasmuch as, considering that,*† indicating not so much a standard of comparison, as the ground of the subsequent exhortation—'*forasmuch as His*

* And is retained by Lachmann.

† ὡς with the genitive absolute.

Divine power'—whose? As the writer had just spoken of 'God and of Jesus our Lord,' it is not certain, nor is it important that we should be able to determine, whether he now thinks specially of God,* or of Jesus our Lord,† or of God and Jesus,‡ as existing in the unity of the Godhead, and of the Divine operation. The points we have rather to consider are the rich spiritual endowment of believers, and the manner in which they attain to it, and the ends for which it is bestowed.

I. First, their spiritual endowment. This embraces '*all things that* pertain *unto life and godliness*'—whatever is needed for the production, preservation, growth, and perfection of life and godliness. There is, of course, no reference here to the natural life of man, however true it is that 'godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is,' as well as 'of that which is to come.'§ The writer is speaking of a life peculiar to Christians—the life of the new man—a life that has its root in the knowledge of God, and of which godliness is the fruit. Now there had been a time when they to whom he wrote were strangers to such a life. They were of the Gentiles which knew not God, and were dead in trespasses and sins—nay, twice and three times dead—at once condemned, and depraved, and without strength. What they called their life was but a life in death—a life without God in the world, and therefore filled with all ungodliness. 'Can these bones live?'—no question could have been proposed that seemed less susceptible of a satisfactory answer.‖

And yet, behold, they lived! They were alive unto God, and, while beset by all evil influences and many fiery trials, were living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world!**

Great and wonderful, however, as the change was, the Apostle at once accounts for it by saying that his brethren were in possession of '*all things*' required for its accomplish-

* Bengel, De Wette, Wiesinger, etc. † Calvin, Huther.
‡ Dietlein, Fronmüller. § 1 Tim. 4 : 8.
‖ Eph. 4 : 24; 2 : 1, 12; 1 Thess. 4 : 5; Jude 12; Rom. 1 : 18; 5 : 6; Ezek. 37 : 3.
** Rom. 6 : 11; 1 Pet. 1 : 6; 4 : 12; Tit. 2 : 12.

ment. And what were those things? Apparently the same that are called in the next verse '*the** *exceeding great and precious promises*'—not the mere verbal promises, whether those given in the time of the Old Testament, or some of those lately announced by the Saviour while on earth, but their fulfilment;† just as the patriarchs are said to have 'all died in faith, not having received the promises,' or things promised; and in that same eleventh chapter of Hebrews we find a like statement respecting their believing descendants of many generations. Indeed, it is in this very sense that the word is used in relation to the Christian Israel of the apostolic age, when they were told that they 'had need of patience, that, after they had done the will of God, they might receive the promise,' namely, 'the promise of eternal inheritance,' or the eternal inheritance promised, and to be realized only at the Lord's return.‡

But the question recurs: To what promises, then, does Peter refer as having already been fulfilled to his brethren? And the answer is not far to seek. The very first promise that God gave to man after the fall, that of the woman's victorious Seed, really included in it every other. 'All the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him amen, unto the glory of God.' Hence the exultant and comprehensive terms in which the father of the forerunner in prophetic rapture sang the near birth of Messiah: 'Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for He hath visited and redeemed His people, and hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David; as He spake by the mouth of His holy prophets, which have been since the world began: that we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember His holy covenant; the oath which He sware to our father Abraham, that He would grant unto us, that we, being deli-

* *τά*; which Sin. has likewise in the third verse before *πάντα*.

† So Wiesinger, who also cites Estius, Gerhard, etc. Others (Grotius, De Wette, Huther) think the reference is to the yet unfulfilled promises.

‡ Heb. 9 : 15; 10 : 36; 11 : 13, 39. Comp. Luke 24 : 49; Acts 1 : 4; 2 : 33; Gal. 3 : 14, 22; Eph. 3 : 6. In all these places the word is *ἐπαγγελία*, Peter alone using the form *ἐπάγγελμα* here and at 3 : 13.

vered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life.' In other words, the original and fundamental, the central and all-pervading promise was that of a personal Saviour. The Old Testament Gospel was that such a Saviour should come. The Gospel of the New Testament is that He has come; or, as Paul expressed it in the synagogue of the Pisidian Antioch: 'We declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that He hath raised up Jesus again.'*

But while the gift of the Son of God as our Saviour carries with it and secures all other blessings, we do well to particularize among those blessings, and as another of the promises already fulfilled to the Church, that of the Holy Spirit. This is what our Lord Himself expressly distinguished as '*the* promise of the Father'—a promise that had shone for ages among the records of prophecy—had been taken up and repeated with startling energy by the Baptist—and then again and again renewed and enlarged by the Saviour during His ministry on earth, and that with increasing clearness as 'the time of the promise drew nigh,' at His own entrance within the veil.†

Now these two promises especially—that of a Divine Saviour and that of the Divine Spirit—were things that the old prophets 'ministered not unto themselves, but unto us,'‡ and they may fitly be characterized as *the greatest*,§ *the very great*, or '*the exceeding great and precious promises*,' inasmuch as they who receive this Saviour and this Spirit do in effect receive '*all things that* pertain *unto* ‖ *life and godliness*.' They pass from death into life. Christ Himself becomes their life. The

* 2 Cor. 1 : 20; Luke 1 : 67–75; Acts 13 : 32, 33.

† Is. 44 : 3; Ez. 39 : 29; Joel 2 : 28, 29; Zech. 12 : 10; Matt. 3 : 11; John 1 : 33; 7 : 39; 14 : 16, 17, 26; 15 : 26, 27; 16 : 7–14.

‡ 1 Pet. 1 : 12.

§ *τὰ μέγιστα*. Lachmann and Alford read *ἡμῖν* after *τίμια*, (C, G, J; A has *ὑμῖν* in the same position;) Tischendorf *τίμια καὶ μέγιστα*, (B and Sin., except that the latter has *ἡμῖν* after *τίμια*.)

‖ Sin.[1] here inserts the words, *τὸν θεὸν καί*.

quickening Spirit is also their Sanctifier. Living by the Spirit, they walk by the Spirit.*—To this position of privilege and high dignity do all true believers attain.

II. And our second inquiry is, How do they reach it? The Apostle's answer is, in substance, this: All these things are of God, and they are all His gift—His free gift. Both in providing them for sinners, and in bringing sinners to the knowledge and enjoyment of them, He displays alike His Divine power and His grace. This truth stands out conspicuous in the verses before us, and it is even more strongly marked in the original; there being very little doubt that the words in the last clause of the third verse, '*called us to glory*,' should rather have been, according to the suggestion of the margin, *called us by* † *glory*; or, if we adopt what is now commonly taken to be the better reading, *by His own* ‡ *glory*.

1. Observe, then, in the first place, that in communication of these saving benefits there is a putting forth of the *Divine power*. No power less than that which is Divine could account for the result. 'Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean,' but God? We are expressly told that it was through the overshadowing power of the Highest that a sinful woman bore the Holy Child, the Redeemer of the world. The same power sustained the Man of Sorrows in His life-long conflict with the powers of darkness, gave Him the victory of the cross, and raised Him from the dead to His Father's throne. And it is still the same brooding energy that is even now educing from this chaos of sin and death the new heavens and the new earth—quickening souls with the life of the Risen One, and guiding, guarding, and comforting them amidst all subsequent temptations and perils and sorrows through faith unto salvation, while at the same time it restrains the violence of devils,

* John 5 : 24 and 1 John 3 : 14, (εἰς;) Col. 3 : 4; Gal. 2 : 20; 5 : 25, (πνεύματι, in both clauses.)

† διά. Comp. the force of διά in v. 4; Rom. 6 : 4; Gal. 1 : 15; 2 Thess. 2 : 14, etc.

‡ ἰδίᾳ, for διά, is read by Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford, (Sin. A, C, Vulgate Calvin, etc.)

confounds the counsels of the ungodly, and makes both contribute to the accomplishment of the purposes of grace.*

This idea of the Divine power receiving one of its brightest illustrations in the experience of the Church, is one quite familiar to the sacred writers. Thus, Paul prayed for the Ephesians, that they might know 'what is the exceeding greatness of God's power to us-ward who believe, according to the energy of the power of His might,† which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places;' and for the Colossians, that they might be 'strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness,' as he also exhorts Timothy to 'be partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel according to the power of God.' The celebration of God's power and strength and might, accordingly, is an ever-recurring element in the songs of angels and of the redeemed in heaven.‡ And the very same thought, it is obvious, pervades our text: '*His Divine power* hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness.' And just as Paul speaks of Christ having been 'raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father,' so Peter here says that God 'called us'—that is, effectually, savingly, into the fellowship of His Son and the hope of His children—'*by glory and virtue*,' or, as the last word § primarily imports, *energy, might*. By the use in both places of a somewhat peculiar expression, we are again taught that the resur-

* Job 14 : 4; Luke 1 : 35; 1 Pet. 1 : 5, (see p. 32.)

† *κατὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν τοῦ κράτους τῆς ἰσχύος αὐτοῦ.*

‡ Eph. 1 : 18–20; Col. 1 : 11; 2 Tim. 1 : 8; Rev. 4 : 11; 5 : 12, 13; 7 : 12; 11 : 17; 12 : 10.

§ *ἀρετή*—which in classic Greek, like the Latin *virtus*, often bears the general sense of *excellence* of body or mind. In the Septuagint it is found for הוֹד the *majesty* of God, Hab. 3 : 3; Zech. 6 : 13, and in the plural for מְהֻלָּה or תְּהִלּוֹת, His *praise* or *praises*, Is. 42 : 8, 12; 43 : 21; 63 : 7. In the New Testament it occurs only in Phil. 4 : 8, *(moral excellence,)* 1 Pet. 2 : 9, (plural: the *perfections* existing in the Divine nature, and illustrated in the calling of the Church. See p. 123,) and in the present context.—It is worthy of note, that the Vulgate habitually translates *δυναμις* (as at ch. 2 : 11) by *virtus*, and is followed by Wiclif, *virtue*. The only remains of this in the common version are in Mark 5 : 30; Luke 6 : 19; 8 : 46. Comp. p. 370.

rection of the Saviour and such a calling of wandering, perishing men afford kindred displays of whatever is glorious in the Divine nature, and of the corresponding efficiency of the Divine operation.* And then, resuming the leading statement of the third verse, our Apostle adds that this '*glory and might*' are shown, not merely in calling sinners into the household of faith, but also in the preparations made there for their entertainment: '*whereby*'—that is, *by which* same glory and might—' are given unto us the exceeding great and precious promises'—given, that is, in their fulfilment, as was explained before, and not simply in word.

2. But in all this, be it noticed in the second place, the *grace* of God is not less conspicuous than His power. Much as it has cost Him to provide so great salvation for us, to us it comes freely, and nothing is asked of us in return but the acceptance of it without money and without price. It is no vain repetition—not at all an instance of bad taste or a slovenly style—for Peter to say in one verse, 'His Divine power *hath given unto us* all things that pertain unto life and godliness,' and then immediately in the next verse to say again, 'by which' glory and might '*He hath given*† *unto us* the exceeding great and precious promises.' On the contrary, his language is studiously significant. He would thus the more deeply impress it on our hearts that we have nothing that we have not received, and that all is of grace.

3. On the other hand, however, it must not be supposed for a moment that, when a man is saved, it is done unconsciously, as it were in his sleep, or as when an ass or an ox is dragged out of a pit. The process involves no disregard or violation of his rational and spiritual nature. All is done in benign accordance therewith—nay, consists largely in its enlightenment and rectification. For, as in the old creation, so also in the new, the first word of the Almighty Voice is, 'Let there be light.' Says our Apostle, here too repeating what he had mentioned just before, and what we formerly‡ saw to be a favorite thought throughout this Epistle: 'His Divine power

* Huther: '*δόξα* bezeichnet das Sein, *ἀρετή* die Wirksamkeit.'

† *δεδώρηται*—middle deponent, as in v. 3.

‡ See p. 356.

hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness *through the knowledge* of Him who called us.'* And the term used is again that which denotes full, true, thorough knowledge—at least, such a knowledge of God as first visits the soul in the day of its effectual calling, not only illuminating, but transforming, and enabling it in adoring, filial recognition to say: 'I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth Thee.'† Through this knowledge believers receive the benefit of all that the Divine power has wrought on their behalf, and of all the gifts of redeeming love. In this knowledge, therefore, they 'stand perfect and complete,'‡ and have no need, for whatever concerns spiritual life and godliness, to run after any other knowledge.

III. The inference will appear yet more certain, when we consider, in the last place, the ends for which this knowledge itself, as well as all its accompanying blessings, are bestowed.

These ends are '*life and godliness*,'§ or, as the expression is varied and amplified in the fourth verse, '*that by these*'—to wit, the promises as fulfilled and fulfilling in your experience —'*ye might become*‖ *partakers of the Divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*'

The nature, tendencies, and effect of sin, as a wasting, destroying blight, are well expressed by the term corruption; and the representation is a favorite one with our Apostle.** Here he speaks of corruption as being '*through lust*,' or *in*†† *lust;* that is, as having its source or ground in lust—in depraved affections and appetites, as 'the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life'—that 'evil concupiscence' in its manifold forms, which in the unrenewed

* *διὰ τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως τοῦ καλέσαντος ἡμᾶς.* † Job 42 : 5. ‡ Col. 1 : 12.

§ The *grammatical* reference of *τούτων* to *ἐπαγγέλματα* (Calvin, Dietlein, Huther, Wiesinger, etc.) is more natural than Bengel's to *δόξης καὶ ἀρετῆς*, or Benson and De Wette's to *τὰ πρὸς ζωήν*. De Wette and Huther erroneously cite Calvin as adopting the last reference. Fronmüller would combine it with the first.

‖ *γένησθε.*

** 1 Pet. 1 : 4, 18, 23; 3 : 4; 2 Pet. 2 : 12, 19. Comp. Rom. 8 : 21; 1 Cor. 15 : 42, 50; Gal. 6 : 8, etc.

†† *ἐν.*

heart holds the place due to the love of God, the Supreme Good. And this corruption is said to be '*in the world*'—in it, like poison in the cup, or the dry-rot in wood, or the clinging leprosy, or the breath of the pestilence in the air around us—inherent, inseparable, all-pervading. It taints every sphere of man's being, physical, intellectual, moral, and all the relations of life, whether in the family, or in society, or in the state; and its natural consummation is in everlasting destruction of body, soul, and spirit—the dissolution and horrors of the second death. Meanwhile, from man himself the curse has passed into the ground from which he was taken, and out of which his doom is to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow. The very heavens over his head are shrouded with the baleful shadow, and they too shall pass away. 'For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now;' but not, blessed be God, in despair; in hope rather of a coming 'deliverance from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.'*

Now, says Peter, one grand design of God in all the dispensations of His almighty grace is first of all to work out that same deliverance for His children themselves. In the general pollution and ruin they were involved, even as others. But they '*escape from*'† it, like a bird out of the fowler's snare, or like Lot out of Sodom, and this only through the interposition of the Divine hand—the strength that is in it, and the gifts which it brings. Of Jesus Christ Himself, God's unspeakable gift, we read that He 'gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.' And this purpose of His atoning death He finally accomplished 'by the laver of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.' What was said of old to the members of the church of Corinth will be no less true of the innumerable multitude—the general

* Col. 3 : 5; Rom. 8 : 21, 22.

† *ἀποφυγόντες*, with the genitive. This verb occurs in ch. 2 : 18, 20, and nowhere else in the New Testament. Instead of *τῆς ἐν κόσμῳ ἐν ἐπιθυμίᾳ φθορᾶς*, Sin. reads *τὴν ἐν τῷ* (A, B, C likewise have the article, which is edited by Lachmann) *κόσμῳ ἐπιθυμίαν φθορᾶς*.

assembly of the redeemed: 'But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.'*

Nor do even these blessings fully take in 'the breadth, and length, and depth, and height' of this great salvation. Our text plainly points to a yet more transcendent and altogether illimitable glory, when it speaks of our '*becoming partakers of the Divine nature*'† as an ultimate end of the economy of redemption. We are not, indeed, to indulge the pantheistic dream of the absorption of our individual personality into the Divine essence. But, while utterly repudiating so wild a figment of profane speculation, let us not doubt, on the other hand, that the realities of truth amply justify the Apostle's language.

If God Himself be our God, and all His attributes and infinite resources form the guarantee of our eternal well-being, may we not rightly be said to 'partake of the Divine nature'?

Let it also be considered that God's children do share, according to the measure of the creature, in His own perfections; and that the original constitution of man, as made in the image, after the likeness, of God, may well be conceived of as rendering their capacity in this respect greater even than that of angels. The eternal years of God are theirs. Through Him who strengtheneth them they can do all things. Renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created them, they see light in the light of God. They have an unction from the Holy One, and know all things. They are created in righteousness and holiness of the truth—called to be holy as God is holy—in such a way, and to such a degree, as to be partakers of His holiness. They shall tread Satan under their feet. They shall judge the world. They shall inherit all things. They shall sit with Christ in His throne.‡ It is not strange that the possession of such powers and pre-

* 2 Cor. 9 : 15; Tit. 2 : 14; 3 : 5, (λουτροῦ;) 1 Cor. 6 : 11.

† Sin.: *θειάς φύσεως κοινωνοί.*

‡ Gen. 1 : 26; Phil. 4 : 13; Col. 3 : 10; Ps. 36 : 9; 1 John 2 : 20; Eph. 4 : 24, (*ὁσιότητι τῆς ἀληθείας*;) 1 Pet. 1 : 15, 16; Heb. 12 : 10; Rom. 16 : 20; 1 Cor. 6 : 2, 3; Rev. 21 : 7; 3 : 21.

rogatives as these should be described as a participation of the Divine nature.

But, still better to understand the blessed import and appropriateness of the phrase, we must not leave out of view those great mysteries of the faith—the incarnation of the Son of God, the vital union of believers with the Lord, and the personal indwelling in them of the Holy Spirit. It is only as 'through a glass, darkly,' that we can now look into any one of these wondrous verities. But in the presence of all three we can feel well assured, that to say of the Church, She is made a partaker of the Divine nature and sits in heavenly places, involves no stretch of thought or language beyond what is required by the statement: 'The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.' He stooped to her low estate, and that not so much in the way of outward succor as of the closest identification—becoming bone of her bones and flesh of her flesh—that He might then lift her to a partnership in His glory—the glory which He had with the Father before the world was. And here again the result is reached, not so much in the way of local approximation, as of spiritual oneness. Believers are members of Christ's body, of His flesh, and of His bones—not, however, of a dead Christ, but of the living—of that same redeemed humanity, which now in the person of the eternal Son lives and reigns for ever in the glory of the Father. 'He that is joined unto the Lord is one Spirit.' And thus at last is fulfilled the Saviour's prayer: 'As Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us.'*

We have thus under the apostolic guidance considered, as was proposed, the rich spiritual endowment of believers, the manner in which they attain to it, and the ends for which it is bestowed. In our next Lecture we shall see what, according to the Apostle, is the practical bearing of these high truths on the present character and life of Christians.

* 1 Cor. 13 : 12; 6 : 17; John 1 : 14; Gen. 2 : 23; John 17 : 5, 21; Eph. 5 : 30.

Lecture III.

2 *Peter* 1 : 5-7.

'And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue ; and to virtue knowledge ; and to knowledge temperance ; and to temperance patience ; and to patience godliness ; and to godliness brotherly kindness ; and to brotherly kindness charity.'

In the two previous verses the writer sets forth the gracious privileges conferred on his brethren, and here he summons them to their corresponding duties ; the latter, you are to observe, being introduced as usual by way of natural and necessary inference from the former. This is more clearly indicated in the original, where for the words, '*And besides this*,' we have what would be better rendered, '*But for this very reason also ;*'* that is to say, Divine grace having supplied the motive and the spiritual ability, beware lest ye frustrate the grace of God. Think not that, since He has done so much for you, you have nothing to do yourselves. On the contrary, just because it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. Recollect the great ends for which He has called and quickened you, and enriched you with all gifts of His almighty love ; 'that, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world through lust, ye might become partakers of the Divine nature.' Rest not satisfied, then, with a mere negative salvation, or with any low, fragmentary measure of accomplishment. But, coöpera-

* καὶ αὐτὸ τοῦτο δέ, (Sin : καὶ αὐτὸ δὲ τοῦτο.) See Passow, (οὗτος, II. C,) Kühner, § 278. R. 2, and Winer § . Comp. Xenophon, *Anab.* 1. 9. 21.— Lachmann reads αὐτοὶ δέ, (A.)

ting to the full extent of the Divine purpose, go on unto perfection.* Nor is this to be done without care and effort on your part, but only by your '*giving*'—or as Peter's word, which occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, might be translated, *contributing*†—'*all diligence.*'

Two or three other verbal criticisms may here be noted as worthy of attention. Thus, the phrase, '*add to your faith*,' would more properly be, *furnish in your faith.*‡ It is the same verb that in the eleventh verse, and in the few other texts§ in which it is met with, is rendered in our version *to minister*, and so it is here in most of the older English versions.‖ The substitution of *in* for *to* holds good in all the clauses.

Again, since *virtue* is now used almost exclusively as the name of moral excellence in general, one does not readily see how we can be required to add first virtue to faith, and then to virtue the particular virtues that are immediately specified. Most interpreters, therefore, are agreed in taking the Greek term here in a sense akin to that in which we found it employed in the third verse to denote the Divine might or efficiency.** In the present instance it is quite commonly, and I believe correctly, understood to convey the idea of *fortitude*, *firmness*, *energy*, etc.††

I shall only add that *temperance*, as now commonly used of moderation in eating and drinking—if, indeed, the later application of it to abstinence from intoxicating drinks has not come to be still more current and popular—by no means gives the full meaning intended in the sixth verse. We shall do well to exchange this term for some one more general, as *moderation*, *self-government*, *self-control*. So that with these modifications, and of course changing also *charity* of the

* Gal. 2 : 21; Phil. 2 : 12, 13; Heb. 6 : 1.

† παρεισένεγκαντες. Bengel takes the παρά as indicating modesty; De Wette and Huther as=*on your side*; Wiesinger, *daneben*, *dagegen*.

‡ ἐπιχορηγήσατε ἐν.

§ 2 Cor. 9 : 10; Gal. 3 : 5; Col. 2 : 19.

‖ As Wiclif, Tyndale, Cranmer, the Rhemish. The Genevan has *ioyne moreouer*, both it and the common version apparently following Beza's *adjicite*.

** See p. 363, note §.

†† For the use of ἐγκράτεια, see Acts 24 : 25; Gal. 5 : 23; Septuagint Sir. 18 : 30, etc.

seventh verse into *love*, we may read the whole thus: '*But for this very reason also do ye, contributing all diligence, furnish in your faith fortitude; and in fortitude, knowledge; and in knowledge, self-control; and in self-control, patience; and in patience, godliness; and in godliness, brotherly kindness; and in brotherly kindness, love.*'

On these words I would now remark, in the first place, that those addressed are assumed to be believers. They are not asked to furnish faith. That, according to the description previously given of them, they had already obtained as the gift of God. No doubt, the very first duty of every man to whom the Gospel comes is to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. But, having once been brought through grace to believe, he is then to see to it, in the exercise of the powers of his new life, that faith do not remain inoperative and alone. Out of it, as from their natural germ, must grow all the features of the Christian character.

And from this again it follows that these various graces—the several members of the new man—are held together by the bond of a living unity. They are not, indeed, equally developed in all the children of God, nor even in the same individual. This depends in a great measure on the original constitution, the education and circumstances of men. But it is none the less true that all the fruits of the Spirit hang on the same stem, and draw their life and nourishment from one and the same root. And not only so, but each is related to, and implies, every other, and is itself supplemented by the rest, and without them is not made perfect.* Something like this is readily enough suggested by that peculiar turn of phraseology which has been pointed out: '*furnish in your faith fortitude; and in fortitude, knowledge;*' and so on, all Christian virtues lying contiguous to and overlapping one another, while of the whole domain faith is the centre and citadel. Abide in that to which you have attained, and in the spirit and power of that take your next step—nay, complete the cycle of duty. Of each pair of graces here mentioned

* Heb. 11 : 40.

the one is to be *in* the other, like adjoining colors of the rainbow—mingled with it, and exhibited along with it—and then all coalesce into one bright orb of beauty, binding together heaven and earth, God and man. For of the glorious arch faith is the starting-point, and the consummation is love.

Nor is the general truth of this representation impaired, it is rather confirmed, by the fact that the order of mention might be, and actually is sometimes, varied. Thus Paul again and again begins his enumerations of the moral duties just where Peter ends, with 'love.'* In fact, as has been already intimated, all the links of this golden chain have the closest mutual connection, so that, laying your hand on any one of them, you can at pleasure touch any other. But at present let us turn over these links in brief review, just as they lie in the passage before us.

'*Furnish in your faith fortitude*'—the fortitude that faith inspires, and which in its turn honors faith. Let not yours be a timid, feeble, ineffective faith; but let it show a power and energy befitting its source—even the Divine power and might celebrated just before in the third verse. Like the tribes of Israel in the wilderness, you too have been redeemed 'with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm.' Follow with no hesitating or tottering steps the cloudy, fiery pillar in which, as you believe and know, God dwells. Whatever it be that you are called to do or to suffer for His name's sake, 'stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.' What the Apostles require of us is a certain manliness of character and action—a strenuous tone and vigor of soul†—something of that heroic quality of faith, by which in ancient times it had 'subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness was made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens,' and by which, also, in the first ages

* Rom 12 : 9; Gal. 5 : 22; Phil. 1 : 9.

† Bengel: 'strenuus animæ tonus ac vigor.'

of the Church, it renewed and multiplied similar and yet greater exploits in the wider field of the Roman empire.*

The next thing required is '*in fortitude knowledge*'—not quite the same word, nor is the idea the same, as when the previous verses speak of 'the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord,' 'the knowledge of Him that calleth' us.† Here it is rather a practical knowledge that is meant—the knowledge of duty, of what it becomes a Christian to do in the various relations and circumstances of life, as when in the First Epistle (3 : 7) husbands are exhorted to dwell with their wives 'according to knowledge.' Of course, a very different thing from the false, pretentious, speculative knowledge in which some were beginning to boast themselves. And this knowledge was to accompany and temper fortitude. A zeal that is *not* according to knowledge—a force void of discretion ‡—a blind strength—a reckless daring—these are not Christian ornaments, however frequently they are mistaken for such. On the other hand, the firm resoluteness of spirit which faith in God produces and justifies, and which is ready at all costs and hazards to go forward in the path of His choosing, is an excellent preparation for enabling a man to discern in what direction that path lies. 'If any man will do'—is bent on doing—'God's will, he shall know of the doctrine.' § An evangelical fortitude is favorable to the enlargement of evangelical knowledge; which, in its turn, is essential to the regulation and safe exercise of fortitude.

Hence, in the third place, the connection in our text of knowledge with self-control: Furnish '*in knowledge self-control*.' An ignorant person, however well disposed, or rather in proportion to the strength even of his good impulses, is prone to extravagance, both in judgment and action, and so is apt to let his good be evil spoken of; as when he casts his

* Deut. 26 : 8; 1 Cor. 16 : 13; Heb. 11 : 33, 34.

† There ἐπίγνωσις—here γνῶσις.

‡ Rom. 10 : 2.—Horace, *Carm.* 3. 4. 65–7 :

> 'Vis consilî expers mole ruit sua!
> Vim temperatam Dî quoque provehant
> In majus.'

§ John 7 : 17, (ἐάν τις θέλῃ.)

pearls before swine, or rushes unbidden into the fire of martyrdom, or thinks by the wrath of man to work the righteousness of God, and in his hatred of sin, or of what he deems to be sin, fails in charity to the sinner, or scandalizes and maligns his brethren. Moreover, the tendency of unsanctified knowledge itself is to 'puff up.'* The knowledge especially of which the fanatics of that age made their boast begat a spirit of the wildest presumption, and in particular was thought to set its votaries free from all obligation of restraint on the bodily appetites. True knowledge, on the contrary—such knowledge as is learned in the school and at the feet of Christ—the knowledge of ourselves as fallen and as redeemed—of man's weakness and temptations, and of God's grace, that alone enables him to surmount both—the knowledge of what this world is at its best estate, and of the transcendent, infinitely solemn interests of eternity—the knowledge, finally, and daily study of Christ's own character, that glorious embodiment of all that is meek and gentle, pure and peaceable, lovely and of good report—the knowledge, I say, and spiritual understanding of these things tends directly and strongly to beget calmness and moderation in our dealings with others, as well as a spirit of habitual recollection and self-restraint in our individual pursuits. And in this case too may be noted the existence of reciprocal action. As a natural result of Christian knowledge is a temper of sobriety, so does such a temper preserve the eye of the soul clear and untroubled for still deeper researches into the things of God. There is nothing more fatal to spiritual discernment than the abandonment of heart and life to worldly dissipation or fleshly lusts.

Not less obvious is the connection between self-control and its other neighbor, *patience:* Furnish '*in self-control patience*,' or a steadfast endurance, under whatsoever persecutions or temptations.† In this quality a passionate, or an effeminate, licentious person is sure to be found deficient; whereas he who can best withstand the allurements and solicitations of all that is earthly and sensual, is the likeliest to face without

* 1 Cor. 8 : 1.

† Epictetus : 'Ανέχου καὶ ἀπέχου=*Sustine, abstine*=sustain, abstain.

flinching the opposition of the world, the assaults of Satan and his emissaries, the tongue of slander, or the tyrant's sword. It is not that he will not feel the pressure of the cross, but that with his mind undistracted, and his spiritual fibres unrelaxed, by secular indulgence, he is able to bear it. And then again the bearing of it confirms, while it illustrates, his self-control. According to that word of the Lord, 'in his patience he possesses his soul.'*

But you are not to suppose that this patience or power of endurance, any more than the other qualities mentioned, is an attainment or constitutional endowment of the natural man. It is the patience of faith—of faith in 'the God of patience'—of faith in His presence, His sovereignty, His love, His promises. And therefore says the Apostle, though he had already at the first suspended all on faith, yet with a regard perhaps to the special necessities of the time: Furnish '*in patience godliness*.' Endure as seeing Him who is invisible. Let the thought of God—a religious sense—holy reverence—and a child-like trust in Him—be the life and strength of patience. It will then be no sullen submission to an inevitable fate, but 'the patience of hope,' like that of Jesus Christ Himself, when He endured the cross for the joy that was set before Him. And all the while it will be found no less true that patience worketh experience. Suffering thus, you will have an ever-growing assurance of the Divine favor; and godliness, having produced patience, will by patience be nourished and enlarged. You recollect the Psalmist's song of old: 'I love the Lord, because He hath heard my voice and my supplications. I was brought low, and He helped me. Return unto thy rest, O my soul.'†

And then, loving God, see that ye love also your brethren: Furnish '*in godliness brotherly kindness*.' In his First Epistle the writer insists much and earnestly on this grace, and there, as here, he urges its necessity as a fruit and evidence of regeneration, and of the filial relation to God.‡

* Luke 21 : 19.

† Rom. 15 : 5; 5 : 4; Heb. 11 : 27; 12 : 2; Rev. 1 : 9; 1 Thess. 1 : 3; Ps. 116 : 1, 6, 7.

‡ See on 1 Pet. 1 : 22, 23; 2 : 17; 3 : 8; 4 : 8.

And when, lastly, he would have believers furnish '*in brotherly kindness love*,' he may be understood as requiring a higher intensity of the feeling than the first of the two expressions might be supposed to imply, as when in one of the passages just referred to he said with a like change of phrase: 'Having purified your souls in the obedience of the truth through the Spirit unto brotherly kindness unfeigned, out of a pure heart love one another intensely.'* This, however, by no means excludes the more common explanation of the last clause as extending the sphere of the benevolent affections beyond the limits of the Christian brotherhood, and so as to include all men, even our enemies. 'He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God,' for 'God is love,' and, while He too has special favor 'for those of His own house,' He is 'good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works.' 'He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.'† There is therefore a beautiful significance in the Apostle's close juxtaposition of godliness with brotherly kindness and love—fervent, all-embracing love.

It deserves now to be noticed once more, that this train of graces—this 'rosary and conjugation of Christian virtues,' as Jeremy Taylor calls it‡—begins with faith, and ends with love; the one being the foundation or root, the other the crowning glory and bright, consummate flower of all Christian excellence.

Such, then, in the judgment of our Apostle, should be, so far as we are personally concerned, our great aim in life—not the enjoyment of ease and quiet, nor yet the accumulation of wealth, or honor, or influence, or stores of learning, but the 'building up of ourselves on our most holy faith,' or in other words, the formation of a perfect character. Nor, as we formerly remarked, and in spite of the lazy dream of very many Christian professors, is this highest end to be reached without effort. It requires, on the contrary, not only the plastic

* 1 Pet. 1 :-22, (φιλαδελφίαν . . . ἀγαπήσατε.)
† 1 John 4 : 16; 1 Tim. 5 : 8; Ps. 145 : 9; Matt. 5 : 45.
‡ *The Great Exemplar*, 2. 12. 34.

energy of Divine grace, but the contribution also on our part of '*all diligence*.' Alas! how very little of this diligence shows itself among church-members! How very little is there even, it may be feared, of conscious desire to grow in grace, and go on unto perfection! Still less is there of Paul's visible pressing toward the mark. And seeing the hindrances are so many and so formidable both within us and around, and we meanwhile are thus lethargic and unconcerned about our greatest interest, it is only too easy to account for the low and incomplete, the stunted, distorted, mutilated character of average Christians. May God of His great mercy arouse us, as many as have named the name of Christ, to a more painstaking earnestness in running the race set before us, and save poor souls, wandering on every side, while they look on and jeer at us, from being themselves prejudiced and destroyed by our example of unfaithfulness to our high calling.

Them too I would affectionately warn against the delusion increasingly prevalent in our day, that it is quite possible for a man to attain to a symmetrical, blameless character, such as God Himself will acknowledge and reward, apart from the grace of regeneration and the faith of His children. True, there may be even in that case the semblance of most or of all of the virtues here enumerated, nor are such counterfeits without their value and uses in human society. But this I say, that these are not the fruits of the Spirit, and that, reared in the cold shade of unbelief, they are for the most part easily enough distinguished even now by the spiritual taste as having never partaken of 'the root and fatness' of the Heavenly Vine, and never felt the mellowing influence of the Sun of righteousness. Rid your minds, I pray you, of the preposterous, the fatal, presumption, that any such Cain's offering as that will be accepted at the altar, or on the judgment day, in place of the blood of expiation, and a holiness that reflects the image of the holy Saviour. These better things you have not, because you refuse to receive them from the hand of a Mediator. What if that which you have, and in which alone you trust, shall be taken away from you? There is, as we have seen, a gracious kindred among the virtues, and it might be shown that there exists a foul affinity

of as close a kind among the vices. Nor is there any thing in moral science more certain than the progressive deterioration of a soul cut off from the Fountain of life. 'The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. The way of the wicked is as darkness' —yea, it leads ever downward into the deepening gloom of 'the blackness of darkness for ever.'*

* Rom. 11 : 17; Matt. 13 : 12: Prov. 4 : 18, 19; Jude 13.

Lecture IV.

2 *Peter* 1 : 8–11.

'For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.'

The preceding exhortation to the diligent culture of an evangelical morality in its sevenfold specification is here enforced by the consideration of what is involved, on the one side, in the observance of the precept, and, on the other, in the neglect of it.

'*For if these things*'—the various Christian graces just enumerated—'*be in you, and abound, they make* you that ye shall *neither* be *barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*'

What was the precise distinction, if any, intended between being '*barren*' and being '*unfruitful*' is far from being obvious. But the question is not one that would be suggested by the original. There the first word* means *sluggish, inert,* or, as it is rendered in our English Testament six times out of eight,† *idle;* and so the older English versions ‡ and our own in the margin give it also in the present instance.

Nor does Peter put the whole verse quite so strongly into

* ἀργούς. † Matt. 12 : 36; 20 : 3, 6; 1 Tim. 5 : 13; Tit. 1 : 12.
‡ Tyndale, Cranmer, Geneva.

the hypothetical form as do our translators ;* but with his eye on the case before him, the profession and standing of those addressed, (vs. 1, 10,) what properly belongs to that, (vs. 3, 4, 9,) and their actual attainments, (vs. 12, 19,) he would seem to illustrate thereby a general truth or law of the Divine life. No doubt, what he desires to impress on his readers is, that a certain result is dependent on certain conditions. But, in doing this, he may be understood as courteously assuming that both the conditions and the result are realized in them. The objection sometimes taken to this view, that it is contradicted by the hortative style of the previous context, overlooks the fact that apostolic zeal and intercessions, no less than apostolic joy and thanksgivings, are ever quickened by the fidelity of the churches.† At all events, the mere structure of the verse would be better represented thus : '*For these things being yours*'—yours in real and abiding possession ‡—'*and abounding*'—or rather *increasing*,§ the natural consequence of the possession ; what is meant is not their present abundance, or their present superiority in that respect to others,‖ but their own continual growth in grace—'*these things being yours, and increasing, make* you'—*render, constitute* you, establish your character as **—'*not idle nor unfruitful in*'—or *as to*—'*the true knowledge*†† *of our Lord Jesus Christ.*'

The Lord Himself had spoken again and again of laborers 'standing *idle* in the market-place,' doing no useful work for God or man. And in another parable He had described the thorny-ground hearer, in whom 'the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becometh *unfruitful*'—an image that frequently recurs in His discourses. Now, we can well believe that Peter, having heard both these

* Erasmus and Vatablus change the Vulgate *si adsint* into *cum adsint ;* and so Dietlein and Huther have *indem* for Luther's *wo.*

† Comp. Rom. 1 : 8–11 ; Eph. 1 : 15–18 ; Col. 1 : 3–10 ; 1 and 2 Thess. throughout, etc.

‡ *ὑμῖν ὑπάρχοντα,* (Lachmann *παρόντα,* after A.)

§ *πλεονάζοντά.* Comp. 1 Thess. 3 : 12.

‖ Wahl : 'nobis . . . magis insunt quam in aliis.'

** *καθίστησι.* Comp. James 4 : 4, (Greek.)

†† *εἰς τὴν ἐπίγνωσιν.*

expressions from the lips of his Master, and remembering them still, intentionally availed himself of them in the present admonition to his brethren. That any after being sent into the vineyard, where the work is so urgent and the wages are so bountiful, should idle still even under the eye of the Householder—that no fruit should be found on trees planted by the rivers of water, in the rich soil of grace—this strikes the Apostle as something unnatural and monstrous. Better far that they had been left to grow wild in the rank luxuriance of their native forest. Better far that they had continued to stand the rest of the day 'idle in the market-place.' Their shame would have been less, and their punishment comparatively light. From the greater reproach and loss nothing could now save them but that strenuous pursuit of holiness, to which they were pledged by their profession. The spirit of a lazy indifference to moral improvement and active well-doing—the absence of the Christian virtues in character and life—is something that cannot be reconciled with '*the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ*,' of *His* life, and character, and work, and teaching. In every one of the particulars before mentioned—in faith, in fortitude, in knowledge, in self-control, in patience, in godliness, in brotherly kindness, in love—He 'left us an example, that we should follow His steps;' and no man fails to follow, without thereby belying his own pretensions to saving knowledge.*

But not only is '*the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ*' the spring of true holiness; it is also sometimes represented as being itself in its higher experimental development the end and aim of the Christian life. The best evidence that can be given of 'knowing' the Lord is to 'follow on to know' Him. Thus all along through Paul's apostolic career, and long after he had been caught up to the third heaven, it continued still to be the dearest object of his ambition, 'that he might know' Christ; and not until that which is perfect comes did he hope to see Him as He is, and so to 'know even as also he was known.'† Now, there is a peculiarity in the

* Matt. 20 : 3, 6; 13 : 22; Mark 4 : 19; Luke 13 : 6, 7; Ps. 1 : 3; 1 Pet. 2 : 21.

† Hos. 6 : 3; Phil. 3 : 10; 1 John 3 : 2; 1 Cor. 13 : 10, 12.

phraseology of this eighth verse, that has led some* to regard this idea of the believer's perpetual advance in knowledge as the one chiefly intended by the writer, as if he had said: '*These things being yours, and increasing, render* you *not idle nor unfruitful* as regards your onward progress *into the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*' One sure result of your faithful cultivation and enlargement of practical holiness will be to increase the range and clearness of your spiritual vision.

The statement we have just considered, whichever of these two views be taken of it, receives a negative illustration and proof in the ninth verse: '*For*' †—not *but*—'*he that lacketh these things*'—or, as this case of the barren professor *is* really put hypothetically,‡ *he that should lack these things*—'*is blind.*' He may say that he sees. He may even claim to be a specially knowing person, a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness.

But all the while he knows not that he himself is blind—knowing nothing yet as he ought to know. As another Apostle says of the man, who, destitute of the one grace of brotherly kindness, hateth his brother, he 'is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.' §

But why, then, is it immediately added, '*and cannot see afar off*'? Many || would avoid the apparent tautology, or rather the implied contradiction, by translating the one word for which this stands, *shutting his eyes*, the blindness being voluntary. There are reasons,** however, why it may be thought

* Bede, De Wette, Brückner, Huther. Fronmüller combines this with the other view.

† Our Version nowhere else translates *γάρ for*, except in 1 Pet. 4 : 15, (see p. 292, note ‡,) and once, Rom. 5 : 7, it has *yet*.

‡ As shown by the conditional *μή*, (see p. 193, note *.)

§ John 9 : 41 ; Rom. 2 : 19 ; Rev. 3 : 17 ; 1 Cor. 8 : 2 ; 1 John 2 : 9–11.

|| From Stephens to Peile.

** Μυωπάζω (in the New Testament found only here) comes immediately, not from *μύω* and *ὤψ*, but from *μύωψ* ; one who, in order to see an object, is compelled by a defect in the organ to wink, or contract the eyelids. See also Aristotle's definition of the *μυωπάζοντες* in Probl. sect. 31.—The Vulgate and a few later versions (Tyndale, Erasmus, Calvin, etc.) follow the gloss *ψηλαφῶν, groping*.

better to retain the idea of our Common Version, and to reconcile the two clauses thus: '*He is blind, being near-sighted*—able to look only, and that with bleared eyes, at the things which are seen. To the things which are not seen, but are far above out of his sight, to wit, the glory of Christ, the grand object of the saving knowledge just spoken of, he is indeed blind, stone-blind.' According to the terrible description given of such in Jude's Epistle, 'he speaks evil of those things which he knows not: but what he knows naturally, as a brute beast, in those things he corrupts himself.'*

'*Having forgotten*'—it is then said in the last place, as if there could be no sadder feature in the case than this—'*the cleansing away of his old sins;*' such is more nearly the form of the clause in the Greek.† Those '*old sins*' belonged to what was spoken of in the First Epistle as 'your vain walk handed down from your fathers,' or 'the former lusts in your ignorance,' of which a specimen is also given there in the fourth chapter.‡ Now, there may have been a time when the person supposed was under real conviction of sin; when sin and its expiation were the subject of his daily and most anxious thoughts, and the multiplied sacrifices of the idolaters could, he well knew, bring his troubled conscience no relief. Turning from them with disdain, he hastened toward the new altar of the Church, and its one great 'propitiation for the sins of the whole world,' and there at the summons of the preacher was 'baptized,' according to Peter's own word, on the day of Pentecost, 'for the remission of sins.' But in this case, as in numberless similar§ cases both then and since, the confession of the mouth had not been prompted by any living faith of the heart. Ere long his spiritual impressions faded, former associations reasserted their sway, and amid fresh excitements of the world he lost all his interest even in the blood of atonement, and '*forgot*' his own obligations to Divine grace, and how near he had once stood to the Saviour of sinners, and to the kingdom of the saved.

* 2 Cor. 4 : 18; Ps. 10 : 5; Jude 10.

† λήθην λαβὼν τοῦ καθαρισμοῦ τῶν πάλαι αὐτοῦ ἁμαρτιῶν, (Griesbach, Scholz, Tischendorf, read ἁμαρτημάτων after Sin. A, J.)

‡ 1 Pet. 1 : 14, 18; 4 : 2, 3.

§ 1 John 2 : 2; Acts 2 : 38.

The language of the verse applies thus emphatically to an unrenewed man, who, after a partial and transient awakening and a sacramental washing away of his sins, relapses into ungodliness. But be it understood that just in so far as a true Christian at any time falls under the power of temptation, and yields himself a servant to sin, and so long as he continues therein, it may be said of him also, and with scarcely less truth: '*He is blind, being near-sighted, having forgotten the cleansing away of his old sins.*' The dimness or the extinction of the soul's perception of Divine things is related both as cause and effect to an unholy life. Especially is such a life incompatible with a due remembrance of Calvary, of God's pardoning mercy and our justified state.

On these representations, then, on the one hand, of the necessity, honor, and blessing of virtue and godliness, and, on the other hand, of the curse and shame of their opposites, the Apostle resumes with increased urgency his work of exhortation.

'*Wherefore the rather, brethren*'—this title of address, which does not occur elsewhere in Peter's Epistles, is an expression at once of his love and of his earnestness—'*Wherefore the rather,*' seeing that on your faithful compliance depend the credit and profit of your Christian profession, '*be diligent* to make your calling and election sure.*'

By '*calling and election*' here, it is obvious enough, we are not to understand merely the outward call of men by the Gospel, nor yet their gathering within the pale of the visible Church, since both these are facts, which no diligence can make surer than they already are; nor can it be that the Apostle would have his brethren to be solicitous merely about their perpetuation. The calling is none other than that which the Catechisms of the Church distinguish as Effectual Calling—'the work of God's Spirit, whereby, convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renewing our wills, He doth persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the

* σπουδάσατε—the same word as in ch. 3 : 14; Tit. 3 : 12.

Gospel.' And the election is the eternal act of God's sovereign grace whereby some are ordained to everlasting life. The two are inseparably united; the calling in every instance following the election, and the election in every instance preceding the calling. 'Whom God did predestinate, them He also called.'* But inasmuch as men must reason back from the calling to the election, and know absolutely nothing of the latter independently and *a priori*, therefore the calling is here mentioned first.

What, then, is it '*to make* our *calling and election sure*'? Certainly it is not to strengthen God's immutable purpose, or to have our names reinscribed more legibly in the Lamb's book of life. It is simply, as the whole context shows, to confirm the inference as drawn especially by ourselves † from the appearance to the reality—from the effect to the cause—from the stream to its hidden sources—from the quality of the fruit to the nature of the tree and the soundness of its root—from a good life to a gracious condition. One principal means of judging of the latter is by the former. Again and again had Peter himself addressed these brethren as an 'elect race'—'elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.' But he spoke from no secret revelation made to him on that point, but from what was properly implied in their Church standing, joined to what he knew of their manifestations of a Christian character—their faith of the word which in the Gospel had been preached unto them and their establishment therein, their reformation of manners, their living hope, their love to an unseen Saviour and to their fellow-disciples, their joy in the midst of suffering for His sake.‡ So Paul declared his confidence in the election of the Thessalonians from what he remembered of their work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope. And so John knew that he had 'passed from death unto life' not because he had lain in the Lord's bosom, but because he 'loved the brethren.'§

* Rom. 8 : 30.

† Observe the use of the middle, *βεβαίαν—ποιεῖσθε*, and compare the *ἔχομεν βεβαιότερον* of v. 19.

‡ Comp. 1 Pet. 1 : 2 (pp. 13–26) and 2 : 9 with 1 : 5–9, 21, 22; 2 : 7; 4 : 4; 2 Pet. 1 : 12.

§ 1 Thess. 1 : 3, 4, (comp. *Lect. on Thess.* pp. 55–61;) 1 John 3 : 14, (*εἰς.*)

Just in proportion, then, as believers were enabled to multiply and brighten these evidences of a genuine conversion, might it be said that they made sure both their conversion itself and God's thought of love toward them from eternity. They themselves would attain to a blessed assurance, and none of their brethren or teachers would have occasion to say to them, as Paul said to the Galatians, 'I stand in doubt of you.'* The connection between election and conversion is sure—as sure as God's unchangeable love can make it; but it is not surer than is the connection between conversion and a renewed life. Our pursuit of holiness may, indeed, be impeded and interrupted through the weakness of the flesh; but to the same extent does the dimness of a cloud return on the question of our conversion and election. And hence the substitution in this 10th verse of the exhortation to '*make* our *calling and election sure*' for the previous exhortation to 'furnish in faith fortitude; and in fortitude, knowledge; and in knowledge, self-control; and in self-control, patience; and in patience, godliness; and in godliness, brotherly kindness; and in brotherly kindness, love.' Some have even read the present clause thus: 'Be diligent that by means of your good works ye may make your calling and election sure.'† But even without this precarious addition it is evident that the writer regarded the one exhortation as equivalent to the other. And this appears again from what immediately follows:

'*For, doing* ‡ *these things, ye shall never fall*'—shall never so 'stumble that ye should fall.' As the Psalmist has it: 'Great peace have they which love Thy law: there is to them no stumbling-block.'§ Singularly emphatic, too, is our Apostle's own negative: 'Ye shall not by any means fall ever.'‖ A good life can never prove a failure. It may be a life of many storms; but it is not possible that it should end in shipwreck.

* Gal. 4 : 20.

† The reading, *σπουδ. ἵνα διὰ τῶν καλῶν ὑμῶν ἔργων . . . ποιῆσθε* (A, Vulg. Bede) is edited by Lachmann. Sin. *ἵνα διὰ τῶν καλῶν ἔργων . . . ποιεῖσθε.*

‡ *ποιοῦντες.* § Rom. 11 : 11; Ps. 119 : 165, (Hebrew.)

‖ *οὐ μὴ πταίσητέ ποτε.*

Nor is that all that can be said of it. Rather it is the very least. 'By patient continuance in well doing,' the children of God 'seek,' not only exemption from the doom of the ungodly, but 'glory and honor and immortality;'* and they shall not miss their aim. '*For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*'

It was formerly mentioned that the word here rendered *to minister* is the same that occurs in the 5th verse, and which we there rendered *to furnish.*† The point is worth noting, because it brings out a little more distinctly that principle of a gracious reciprocity, on which our Lord condescends to deal with His servants. '*Furnish in your faith,*' and that in an ever-growing measure, the fruits of faith in a pious and useful life, and '*so there shall be richly furnished unto you the entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*'‡ Bountiful sowing shall be followed by bountiful reaping.§ As the Lord Himself earnestly taught His disciples: 'Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom,' or rather indefinitely *shall they give,*‖ or *shall be given, into your bosom;* for He thought not of any earthly and temporal, but of the heavenly and eternal recompenses.

And here again we learn in what those recompenses shall consist. For the promise of our text does not refer to continuous supplies of present grace, though Calvin so explains it, but to the ultimate object of the Christian hope. And that is a *kingdom*—'*the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*'—the kingdom bequeathed to Him by the Father, yet to be established by Him throughout the domain of the curse, and in which He shall eternally reign King of kings—the kingdom of holiness, and love, and beauty. That was 'the joy set before Him,' and toward which He struggled in the days of His flesh through tears and blood.

* Rom. 2 : 7. † See p. 370.

‡ πλουσίως (as in Col. 3 : 16; 1 Tim. 6 : 17) ἐπιχορηγηθήσεται ὑμῖν ἡ (omitted in Sin.) εἴσοδος.

§ 2 Cor. 9 : 6; Gal. 6 : 8. ‖ Luke 6 : 38, (δώσουσιν.)

He Himself even then called it His 'joy.' And into that joy none shall 'enter' as joint heirs with Him but those whom He has redeemed and made meet. Still, considered merely in its human aspects, the salvation of any is a work of exceeding difficulty. 'The righteous scarcely are saved.' But some, as compared with others, are 'saved so as through fire.' They will slink into the kingdom, if we might venture so to say, as by some postern. Very different is 'the entrance' described in our text, and reserved for those who are both 'called, and chosen, and faithful.' To them '*the entrance shall be richly furnished.*' They will not come unheralded nor unattended. 'Their works follow with them;'* or as that thought has been paraphrased by our great Christian poet:

> 'Their works and alms and all their good endeavor
> Staid not behind, nor in the grave were trod;
> But as Faith pointed with her golden rod,
> Followed them up to joy and bliss for ever.'†

At their approach, with all their shining train, the everlasting doors open wide. Harp and song proclaim their welcome; and there is high festival in the presence of God and His angels.

The eleven verses that we have now reviewed are a remarkable instance of the flow and fervor of apostolic utterance.‡ Like the Nile, the Epistle starts full, strong, and rapid from the very source. One could hardly find another passage containing within the same limits a clearer and more exuberant statement of Christian privilege and obligation, or a more distinct assertion by implication of the harmony existing between Divine decree and human responsibility, between God's all-providing, all-suffering grace and the necessity of man's unremitting efforts on his own behalf. The whole passage is a fine illustration of the way in which

* Heb. 12 : 2; Matt. 25 : 21; 1 Pet. 4 : 18; 1 Cor. 3 : 15; Rev. 17 : 14; 14 : 13, (*ἀκολουθεῖ μετ' αὐτῶν.*)

† Milton, sonnet xiv.

‡ The *παῤῥησία*, in which Peter delighted, and seems to have excelled; Acts 2 : 29; 4 : 13, 29, 31, etc.

Apostles themselves were accustomed to fulfil the charge that Paul laid on Titus (3 : 8) : 'This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works.'

And there are several other important lessons to be learned from these last four verses : as,

1. First, that the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ and forgiveness of sins in His name must lie at the foundation of all genuine morality ; vs. 8, 9.

2. Secondly, that all claims of an immoral man to superior knowledge and insight within the sphere of the highest truth are utterly delusive ; v. 9.

3. Thirdly, that we are bound by our Christian calling, not only to abstain from every appearance of evil, but to grow in all that is good in the sight of God and profitable unto men. A stagnant life of negative decorums and proprieties is a sad sign of spiritual torpor and death ; v. 8.

4. Fourthly, that to aspire to certainty in regard to our salvation—to 'the full assurance of hope'*—is a perfectly legitimate ambition for a child of God ; and that the only way of attaining to it is the highway of the redeemed—the way of holiness ; v. 10.

5. Fifthly, that while the opening of the kingdom of heaven does not depend on our good works or on the abundance of them, they will yet be found to have a momentous bearing on the character of our entrance, and on the measure of our reward ; v. 11.

Finally, let us be much in the habit of considering that great hope of our calling—'the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.' Daily, for many generations, has the Church, with whatever imperfect and sometimes erroneous views as to the meaning of the petition, been praying for the coming of that kingdom. And come at last it will, no shadowy phantom of authority, but such a realization of mighty, resistless, unquestioned, beneficent rule, as no heir of an earthly throne ever dreamed of. From sea to sea, and from the river unto the

* Heb. 6 : 11.

ends of the earth, Christ shall reign, and we shall reign with Him.* Blessed amends for all our wrongs and sorrows here! Glorious recompense of all our toil!

* Eph. 1 : 18 : Ps. 72 : 8 ; Rev. 11 : 15 ; 5 : 10 ; 20 : 4 ; 22 : 5.

Lecture V.

2 *Peter* 1 : 12–15.

'Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me. Moreover I will endeavor that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance.'

In these verses the Apostle avows and justifies his settled purpose to do whatever lay in his power for the perpetuation among his brethren of the great truths on which he had been insisting. These truths respected the privileges already bestowed on them by the glorious and mighty grace of God—the obligation which those privileges involved to universal holiness—the ignominy and ruin attending a failure to meet the obligation—and the blessings consequent on fidelity, in the present confirmation of their calling and election, and in their future triumphant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

'*Wherefore*'—on all these accounts, though the reference may be immediately to the last-mentioned considerations—'*I will not be negligent*'—or, according to the reading preferred by many, *I will be sure**—'*to remind*† *you always of these things*.' It has been supposed by some‡ that this is

* So Alford renders the reading μελλήσω (Sin. A, B, C, Vulg.) adopted by himself and Wordsworth, Bengel, Lachmann, Tischendorf, instead of οὐκ ἀμελήσω. Several of these also read δεῖ before ὑμᾶς. Sin. δεῖ περὶ τούτων ὑπομιμνήσκειν ὑμᾶς.

† ὑπομιμνήσκειν.

‡ Griesbach, De Wette.

spoken by anticipation of the topic that comes prominently into view at the 16th verse, to wit, the future coming and kingdom of our Lord. But it is more natural to find here also, as already in the 8th, 9th, and 10th verses, a continuous allusion to what precedes, and in this instance to what has been said in regard to both the standing and duties of Christians.

'*These things*,' the writer admits, were not novelties to those whom he addressed. On the contrary, he was well aware of what he is no less glad to acknowledge, that they not only '*knew* them' as essential parts of the Christian doctrine, but were themselves '*established in the present truth*.' The truth is so called as having 'come to' them in the preaching of the Gospel, and as being now 'nigh them, even in their mouth, and in their heart.' Or as John speaks of the truth as 'dwelling in us, and being with us for ever.'*

Now, in that heavenly, saving truth the first readers of this Epistle were, Peter says, '*established*,' as in the former letter (5 : 12) he had testified that they then 'stood in the true grace of God.' Their original convictions had been strengthened by subsequent experience. Extricated from the dark, wandering mazes of heathen error wherein they had so long been lost, they still exulted, and that with unabated, nay, growing delight, in the light of life, and in the freedom wherewith 'the truth had made them free.' They had, indeed, suffered for their faith, and in their faith had found abundant sources of support and consolation under the trial. As good soldiers of Jesus Christ, they had 'endured hardness,' and might well be regarded as having attained to something of the stability of veterans in the service.†

'*But*' for all that, says the Apostle, '*I think it meet*'—*right*, due to you, and something to which my very office binds me —'*so long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by way of remembrance*.'‡ They were not yet made perfect, and they

* Col. 1 : 6, (τοῦ παρόντος εἰς ὑμᾶς ;) Rom. 10 : 9 ; 2 John 2.

† John 8 : 32 ; 2 Tim. 2 : 3.

‡ δίκαιον δὲ . . . ἐν ὑπομνήσει, (as in ch. 3 : 1 ; Sin. here : ἐν τῇ ὑπομ.)

were still beset by manifold temptations to backsliding and apostasy. Notwithstanding present favorable appearances, they too might some time be in danger of denying God's merciful dealings with them in the past, or the spirit of oblivion, of carnal security and slumber, might steal upon them unawares. And therefore the Apostle could not, as a debtor to all men, and especially to his brethren,* satisfy his sense of obligation except by plying them with frequent, constant admonition. They must not feel hurt, or think it strange that one letter so soon followed another, both filled with earnest exhortation and warning. This was only beginning to do what he meant to do always, and so long as he lived, namely, '*to remind them of these things;*' and, lest they should be either lulled or wearied by the formality of a continual repetition, his aim would be '*in reminding to stir them up*,' thoroughly to arouse them from sleep, and every tendency to sleep,† and so to keep them alert and vigilant, habitually conscious of the love of God, on their guard against Satan's devices, and mindful of their own high calling. To such urgency of ministerial fidelity Peter felt himself constrained, as well by the nature of the solemn charge committed to him, and whose responsibilities would cease only with his life, as by the momentousness of the interests at stake.

But there was yet another consideration that impelled him to this course, and would certainly be allowed to excuse any appearance of unnecessary solicitude on his part; and that was the little time that remained to him for the exercise of his apostolic functions: '*Knowing*,' he says, '*that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me*,' or, *as also our Lord Jesus Christ showed me*.‡

Here again, as in the 13th verse, the present body is metaphorically described as a *tabernacle* or tent, as being the residence at once frail and temporary of the immortal soul, though

* Rom. 1 : 14; Luke 22 : 32.

† Comp. the use of the word (*διεγείρειν*) in Matt. 1 : 24; 4 : 38, 39; Luke 8 : 24; John 6 : 18. It nowhere else occurs in the New Testament, except as above, and in ch. 3 : 1.

‡ *καθὼς καὶ . . . ἐδήλωσε.*

the other part of the phrase, to *put off* this tabernacle, might seem to represent it as a garment.* Some, accordingly, do find here the same mixture of metaphors that occurs in 2 Cor. 5 : 1–4, where the dissolution of 'our earthly house of this tabernacle' is spoken of as a being 'unclothed.' But in the case before us this combination need not be assumed. Closely rendered, the clause might be given thus: '*Knowing that speedy is the laying aside of my tabernacle*'—speedy, that is, in its approach, and soon to be expected; or speedy in its execution, sudden.† It is even probable that both ideas were in the mind of the writer. As an old man, Peter knew that his death could not be far off, and he knew *also* from his Lord's prophecy recorded in the last chapter of John's Gospel, that he was not to live out all his days: 'When thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake he,' adds the Evangelist, 'signifying by what death he should glorify God.' There is no necessity, therefore, for supposing, as some‡ have done, a later revelation on the subject. The Apostle's already advanced age, and the recollection of his risen Lord's word to him by the Sea of Tiberias, were sufficient of themselves, without reference even to the threatening aspect of the times, to assure him, as Paul too felt assured in his own case when about the same period he wrote his Second Epistle to Timothy, that 'the time of his departure was at hand'—the crown of martyrdom almost within his grasp. His season of labor, therefore, being now so nearly exhausted, Peter must use all the more strenuously the little that was left, and he addresses his brethren with the impressiveness and tender authority of a dying man. With his own violent death in immediate prospect, his anxieties are not for himself, but for them. His prophetic eye is turned rather toward the more distant perilous future of the Church; and hence what follows in the next verse.

* Acts 7 : 58. In the New Testament the noun is found only in these Epistles, (1 Pet. 3 : 21.)

† The latter explanation is given by Bengel, Bretschneider, Huther. The word (ταχινός) occurs a second time in the New Testament at ch. 3 : 1.

‡ Estius, De Wette, Brückner, etc

'*Moreover*'—or simply *but:** not only do I think it right, so long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by way of remembrance, *but*, etc.; or: *Notwithstanding* what I know respecting my speedy death, and for that reason—'*I will endeavor that ye may even at all times*'—in every emergency—'*be able*† *after my decease*'—*exodus*,‡ as the word is, or *departure*—'*to call these things to mind.*'§ There was therefore still less occasion for surprise that the writer, while fully aware of his readers' knowledge of, and establishment in, the truth, yet continued to labor, and should labor on to the last, in its inculcation. He had an ulterior object in all this; and that was, through the permanency of the written word, to provide them with an ever ready means of detecting the imposture, and resisting the seductive wiles, of the false teachers who should arise, and against whom, accordingly, is directed the volleyed thunder of the second chapter. He may even have intended that this should be followed by still other communications of his own.‖ At least, this is more probable than that he was thinking, as some have suggested, either of men whom he would ordain for the carrying forward of his work,** or of a Gospel to be brought out, as that of Mark is said to have been, under his auspices.

1. From the example of our great Apostle, as he himself sets it before us in these verses, we perceive *what was one grand design of Christ in the institution of the Gospel ministry.* It was not that there might be a class of men provided with the necessary leisure and accomplishments for pushing their researches into all unexplored regions, inventing ever new systems of philosophy, leading the churches along in untrodden paths of speculative inquiry, or regaling them with the unsubstantial fancies of their own imagination. Theirs was to be a less ambitious, but in reality a more noble as well as

* δέ.

† καὶ ἑκάστοτε ἔχειν ὑμᾶς.—Only Griesbach and Scholz cancel the καί. Many err in attaching it to σπουδάσω, (Sin. σπουδάζω.)—ἑκάστοτε occurs nowhere else in the New Testament.

‡ ἔξοδον. Comp. Luke 9 : 31; Heb. 11 : 22.

§ τὴν τούτων μνήμην ποιεῖσθαι. ‖ De Wette. ** Huther.

a more profitable office. It was to *remind* the churches of what they had already been taught, and by all appropriate motives to *stir them up* to 'give the more earnest heed to the things which they had heard, lest at any time they should let them slip.' * Obviously the work is one of no little difficulty. Very much both of prayer and painstaking is needed to save it from sinking down into the wearisomeness and impotency of a monotonous reiteration. Nor is it greatly to be wondered at that in the hands to which it is too often committed it fails disastrously.

But then, on the other hand, it is by itself no proof at all that the work is prospering, that a crowd follows the preacher. The liveliest interest may pervade the congregation, when in the pulpit there is the scantiest exhibition of the apostolic themes; and no failure can be more disastrous, as there are very few so criminal. How many 'itching ears' of our day are drawn to the sanctuary by no higher motive than that which led the Athenians to the market-place—the desire to 'hear some new thing'! † When there is no longer any hope of hearing that, their attendance becomes more and more fitful, and by and by perhaps they disappear altogether.

This low, foolish humor the primitive teachers were little careful to gratify. That a thing was known was no reason to them why it should not be repeated. 'And I myself am persuaded of you, my brethren,' says Paul to the Romans, 'that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another. Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind.' And again to the Philippians: 'To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe.' In like manner we read in John's First Epistle: 'I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it;' and even John's love for his little children would be satisfied, if 'that abode in them, which they heard from the beginning.' Equally striking is the expression of Jude, whose Epistle is in so many things

* Heb. 2 : 1. † 2 Tim. 4 : 3; Acts 17 : 21.

an echo, as it were, of our own: 'But I wish to remind you, you who once for all know this.'*

If, then, the maturest and best instructed churches of the apostolic age required thus 'precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little,' humility and patience under the word would surely be becoming in an age whose average intelligence of revealed truth is, I fear, in spite of all our tracts and Sunday-schools, and to some extent by reason of these very things, of an exceedingly flimsy sort, and when the generality of church-goers are, as to all the deeper things of the Spirit, 'dull of hearing, and have need that one teach them again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.'†

2. I would have you notice, in the second place, *the Apostle's way of looking at the present life.* In the former Epistle (1 : 1, 17; 2 : 11) he had exhorted his brethren as 'strangers and pilgrims' *(foreigners and sojourners* ‡) to 'pass the time of their sojourning in fear.' Here he speaks as one who himself partook largely of the pilgrim spirit. This body, for whose wants and satisfaction most men provide as anxiously as if it were 'the whole of man,'§ he ever remembered was but a tent for transient occupancy—a tent to be laid aside, as suitable only for the wilderness—a tent from within whose dim, though slight, inclosure he would shortly be called to go forth into another state of existence, where the humility of the tabernacle should in due season be exchanged for the glory of the temple, 'the building of God, the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.'‖

And is not just this *our* position, this *our* expectation, still? Let us as calmly, as gladly, as habitually, recognize and confess the fact. We too 'have here no continuing city,' and with us too 'the time is short.' 'The night is far spent, the day is at hand.' And while our Lord Jesus Christ has showed to us

* Rom. 15 : 14, 15; Phil. 3 : 1; 1 John 2 : 21, 24; Jude 5 (*ὑπομνῆσαι δὲ ὑμᾶς βούλομαι, εἰδότας ὑμᾶς ἅπαξ τοῦτο.* See the notes on that verse in the *Revision.*)

† Is. 28 : 10; Heb. 5 : 11, 12.

‡ See p. 128. § Prov. 12 : 13. ‖ 2 Cor. 5 : 1.

neither the precise period and manner of our departure, nor the hour of His own return, every individual knows as surely as did Peter, that for him too the one or the other of these events is nigh, even at the door. Let us, then, be up and stirring in the service of God and our brethren. And 'whatsoever our hand findeth to do' for Christ and His Church, 'let us do it with our might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither we go.'* Oh! for grace to spend every day as if it were to be, as it may be, our last.

3. One other lesson plainly enough taught by this passage is *the importance—the necessity*—for the stability and edification of the Church, not only of the living ministry, but likewise *of Scripture.* The wisdom of God did not think it good to intrust the heavenly doctrine to the keeping of oral tradition. True, that doctrine was by the Apostles 'committed to faithful men,' and by them to their successors, who should be 'able to teach others also.' But at the same time both the teachers and the taught were furnished, in the evangelical records and the apostolic writings, with an abiding, unvarying, infallible standard for the testing of all tradition, and for the trial of every spirit.†

This Divine economy is well exemplified in the case of Peter. While life lasted, there was no relaxation of the official activity that distinguished him at an earlier date, when we read of him 'passing' in the exercise of his ministry 'throughout all quarters.'‡ The very last hint that the New Testament gives as to his whereabouts seems to place him in his old age at Babylon in the remote east.§ Everywhere he fulfilled with the earnest utterance of the living voice the purpose of ministerial zeal that is here expressed: '*I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though ye know them, and are established in the present truth; but I think it right, so long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up in reminding.*' Now, however, that death was near,

* Heb. 13 : 14; 1 Cor. 7 : 29; Rom. 13 : 12; Eccl. 9 : 10.
† 2 Tim. 2 : 2; 1 John 4 : 1. ‡ Acts 9 : 32. § See p. 333.

and the churches should see his face no more, he would consult for their future safety also, amidst the rising floods of persecution and heresy, by leaving them the legacy of his Epistles, '*that they might even at all times be able after his departure to call these things to mind.*'

In these imperishable documents 'he being dead yet speaketh'—has spoken to the successive generations of the faithful, and speaks still in loving earnestness and solemn warning to the churches of the present day. To no past age, indeed, has the very Epistle now before us been more wonderfully adapted in all its parts 'for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,' than it is, as we may see by and by, to our own. Seriously pondered, it will remind us of some mighty truths, that were once very familiar and very dear to all who bore the name of our Lord, but which have since well-nigh vanished from the memory of Christians.

Lecture VI.

2 *Peter* 1 : 16–18.

'For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with Him in the holy mount.'

These verses, with what follows to the end of the chapter, are intended to justify the preceding expressions of the writer's solicitude that his brethren, both while he lived and after his death, should be kept ever mindful of what he had just been saying respecting the necessity of their living in a manner suitable to the grace they had received, and to the hope which they cherished of an inheritance in the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The justification turns on the certainty of the apostolic testimony in regard to what is here called '*the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*;' and the certainty of that is represented as resting on two pillars, the apostolic experience on the mount of Transfiguration, and the prophetic word.

This mere statement of the connection is sufficient to set aside the notion which refers '*the power and coming*' spoken of to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans.* Nowhere in Scripture is that catastrophe described as the coming of Christ, any more than the similar catastrophes in the days of Nebuchadnezzar and Antiochus are so distinguished.

* Hammond.

Nor is it true that that event was in any sense the burden of apostolic preaching, or a consideration specially urged upon Christians as a motive to holy living. Nor was there any connection between it and the Transfiguration. Besides, wherever in the New Testament the word rendered *coming** is used of Christ or of any other person, it invariably denotes, not a figurative, but an actual, personal presence.

Accordingly, it is more common to suppose that by the phrase '*power and coming*' Peter intended Christ's first appearance in the flesh, and the mighty works which He then wrought in attestation of His claims.† But neither is this view at all satisfactory. It does not explain why the particular scene on the mount should alone have been selected from the numberless other scenes quite as well fitted to establish the reality of the incarnation. Nor was power by any means the distinctive characteristic of the first coming, but rather weakness, temptation, sorrow. Not until He had risen from the dead, and ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things, did He take His seat at the right hand of power, all power being then given unto Him in heaven and in earth. And we know that this His present state of exaltation is in order to a yet future coming—a 'coming,' as He Himself describes it, 'in the clouds of heaven with power.' That will be the revelation of 'the glory of His power'—the 'coming in His kingdom'—when the Father's purpose in the exaltation of the Son shall be fully accomplished, and 'at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.'‡

It seems strange, therefore, that there should have been any mistaking of our Apostle's meaning. His own great pentecostal discourses supply, one would say, all the commentary that is needed. 'This Jesus hath God raised up. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted . . . God hath made

* παρουσία. See *Lect. on Thess.* p. 519.

† Cajetan, Calvin, Grotius, Pareus, Whitby, etc.

‡ Eph. 4 : 10; Matt. 26 : 64; 28 : 18; 24 : 30; 2 Thess. 1 : 9; Luke 23 : 42, (ἐν;) Phil. 2 : 10, 11.

that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. . . . And His name, through faith in His name, hath made this man strong.' So great already was, and such is now, '*the power*' of Him who was dead. And then Peter would immediately go on to tell of God being about to 'send Jesus Christ' again, 'whom,' said he, 'the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.' That will be '*the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*' And to this His '*power and coming*' the Apostles, wherever they went, and in whatever presence they stood of Jews or Gentiles, of priests or princes or people, bore their harmonious and unfaltering testimony.*

Now, says Peter, '*when we*'—we Apostles; not necessarily Peter in person—'*made known*' all this '*unto you*,' we had not ourselves '*followed*'—*gone astray after*†—'*cunningly devised fables*,' or *myths*—the very word branded by the effrontery of modern infidelity on nearly the entire gospel history. Of fables, whether devised by poetry, or philosophy, or superstition, or fraud, with regard, for instance, to the origin, appearances, and doings, of the gods, the world was then full even to weariness. And the heathen mythology itself found more than its match in the gigantic and grotesque extravagancies of Jewish speculation. From these and other kindred sources of corruption the primitive Christianity received a taint which ate as doth a canker, and increased unto more ungodliness.‡ But from every admixture of this sort—from baseless fictions of the human reason or fancy—the teaching of Apostles, both historical and prophetic, about Jesus Christ was free. There was not the least affinity or sympathy or likeness between the two things; and it may be asserted with confidence that whoever does not, as it were instinctively, feel

* Acts 2 : 32, 33, 36; 3 : 16, 20, 21. The hendiadys assumed by some, (Grotius, Horneius, Piscator, Bengel,) as if = *the powerful coming*, is better avoided.

† ἐξακολουθήσαντες. This word occurs again twice in this Epistle, (ch. 2 : 2, 15,) and nowhere else in the New Testament. The ἐκ, Bengel thinks, implies error. The connection at least always does.

‡ Comp. 1 Tim. 1 : 4; 4 : 7; 2 Tim. 2 : 16, 17; 4 : 4; Tit. 1 : 14; Col. 2 : 18–23, etc.

this, is not so much in need of the confutation of argument as he is of a spiritual sense. The evangelical doctrine was based upon, and indeed largely consisted of, facts that came under the immediate observation of the preachers—men for whose sober-mindedness and honesty we have the amplest guarantee in their lives and writings, and in their death of martyrdom. Nor is it difficult to discover why of all those acts that of the Transfiguration is here particularly mentioned.

None other bore so directly on the confirmation of the Church's hope—the hope, namely, of her Lord's everlasting kingdom. The eleventh verse had just held forth the promise of an abundant entrance into that kingdom as a grand motive to a virtuous and godly life; and the writer, moreover, is already thinking of the scoffers of the last days, by whom this ancient hope should be assailed. But—so he seems to say—there is not a point in all our testimony more certain than that. Not only is Jesus Christ now 'Head over all things to the Church,' but He is coming again personally to reign; and a proof of it is, that on one memorable occasion, while the Man of sorrows was yet on earth, 'His visage so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men,'* a few of us were admitted, so to speak, into the interior of His kingly court, and there '*became eye-witnesses of His majesty.*'†

Evidently Peter regarded the event in question as at once a pledge and a specimen of the future kingdom; and the three Gospels in which the occurrence is recorded leave scarcely room for a doubt that the Lord Himself so intended it. In every one of them the narrative is introduced by the Saviour's announcement made only about a week before, that some of the Apostles should 'not taste of death, till,' as it is variously expressed, 'they saw the kingdom of God—the kingdom of God come with power—the Son of man coming in

* Eph. 1 : 22; Is. 52 : 14.

† *ἐπόπται* (a word used only by Peter, but applied in classic Greek to one initiated into the greater mysteries) *γενηθέντες τῆς ἐκείνου μεγαλειότητος*. Wordsworth suggests that both *δύναμιν* and *μεγαλειότ.* point at Simon Magus; Acts 8 : 9, 10.

His kingdom.' And then forthwith each Evangelist portrays the spectacle of the Transfiguration as, it would appear, the fulfilment of that promise.*

Thus viewed, the whole scene assumes a more than historic interest. It gives forth also prophetic hints respecting things to come.

1. May we not say that the bright overshadowing cloud was the very same that afterward hovered over Olivet, and in which our Lord is to come again?†

2. Then the presence within that cloud, along with the Saviour, of Moses who 'died there in the land of Moab, . . . but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day'—we hear only of a mysterious contention about his body between the devil and Michael the archangel—and of Elijah who, like Enoch, 'was translated that he should not see death, and was not found, because God had translated him,' might well represent the reunion in the rendezvous of glory, in the day of Christ's appearing and kingdom, of all His saints—the dead saints who shall rise again, and the living who shall be changed, and both classes caught up together to meet the Lord in the air.‡

3. Again, the ready recognition by the disciples of the identity of these two ancient worthies is no obscure hint of what awaits us in the day of 'our gathering together' into the Lord's presence.§

4. Remember also that the glorified Saviour and His glorified servants were not at all offended even in that hour by the proximity, at different degrees of nearness, of imperfect men in the flesh; and you will rather wonder at the impatience of a supercilious ignorance, that will not tolerate the idea of a similar association during the millennial reign.

5. At the same time, the description of the locality as 'a high mountain apart'—'the holy mountain'—readily suggests the elevation, dignity, aloofness from the common ways of

* Matt. 16 : 28–17 : 1, etc.; Mark 9 : 1–8; Luke 9 : 27–36.
† Acts 1 : 9; Luke 21 : 27.
‡ Deut. 34 : 5, 6; Jude 9; Heb. 11 : 5; 2 Tim. 4 : 1; 1 Thess. 4 : 16, 17.
§ 2 Thess. 2 : 1.

men, yea, the supra-mundane, celestial origin and character of the New Jerusalem, the blessed home of Christ's royal priesthood, and in the light of which shall walk the nations of the saved.*

6. But the central object of interest, and that which more than all the rest made the Transfiguration a suitable type of the kingdom, was the revelation in His robes of majesty of the King Himself. There for a brief space the meek and lowly One suddenly cast aside the weeds of His humiliation, and manifested forth His glory—'the glory,' says another of the eye-witnesses, 'as of the only Begotten of the Father.' It was this very glory, above the brightness of the meridian sun, that smote into the dust the pride and fury of Saul of Tarsus, and a second time dismayed even the beloved disciple, now an aged Apostle, in the isle that is called Patmos, and whose effulgence shall constitute the heaven of the redeemed through eternal ages. Oh! how changed must we too become, to fit us to gaze evermore, not only unharmed and without apprehension, but with joy unspeakable, on the Lord 'as He is'!†

It is not, however, so much on what was seen as on what was heard on the occasion referred to, that the text insists.

'*For He received from God the*‡ *Father honor and glory*'—*honor*, say some, in the voice which spoke to Him; *glory*, in the light which shone from Him.§ But the Evangelists represent the latter as merely the bursting forth of our Lord's own hidden glory, rather than as something received from without. It is better to take both words as used just as Paul uses them together, when he speaks of our 'seeking for glory and honor,' (Rom. 2 : 7; Heb. 2 : 9,) and to regard both as explained by the next clause: '*when there came such a voice to Him*'—or more literally, *a voice being borne to Him such as this*—'*from the excellent*,' or *sublime*, '*glory*'‖—a phrase which

* Matt. 17 : 1; Rev. 21 : 2, 24.

† John 2 : 11; 1 : 14; Acts 26 : 13; Rev. 1 : 9, 17; 21 : 23; 1 John 3 : 2.

‡ Sin. omits *τοῦ* before *θεοῦ*. § So Horneius, Gerhard, Clarke, Alford.

‖ *φωνῆς ἐνεχθείσης αὐτῷ τοιᾶσδε ὑπὸ τῆς μεγαλοπρεποῦς* (only here in the New Testament. Comp. LXX. Deut. 33 : 26) *δόξης*.

many* understand as designating, not the glory in which God dwells, but God Himself: '*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*'

And here let us reverently pause, 'for the place whereon we stand is holy ground,'† and ponder this Divine attestation to the person, character, and work, of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

1. It is, in the first place, God the Father's attestation to the dignity of our Lord's person: '*This is my Beloved Son,*' or *This is my Son, the Beloved One*—such being the emphatic arrangement of the original phrase.‡

In the Greek version of the Hebrew Scriptures the word rendered *beloved* is frequently employed in connection with the word *son*, as equivalent to *only*. Thus, to take one instance, where it is said to Abraham, 'Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac,' the Septuagint has it precisely as in our text, 'Take thy son, the beloved.'§ And hence, on the other hand, our text has sometimes been explained as equivalent to, 'This is my Son, the only,' or 'the only Begotten.'

But even as the verse lies before us, no candid mind will deny that it marks out our Lord and Saviour as the Son of God in a sense altogether characteristic and exclusive; as when He is called 'the Son of God's love,' or 'God's own Son.' Indeed, the simple title, 'the Son of God,' is again and again applied to Him with a like jealous appropriation, as when the writer to the Hebrews, arguing this very point from the Old Testament, says: 'Unto which of the angels said He at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to me a Son.' You recollect also the rage of the Jews when Jesus spoke of God as His Father. They perceived clearly enough that He did so in a way that implied His own coessential equality, as being Himself in the highest sense a partaker of the Divine nature.‖

* Gerhard, Grotius, Bengel, De Wette, Huther, Besser, Alford, Wiesinger.

† Ex. 3 : 5.

‡ Οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός. Alford reads ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός οὗτός ἐστιν.

§ Gen. 22 : 2.

‖ Col. 1 : 13, (τοῦ Υἱοῦ τῆς ἀγάπης αὐτοῦ;) Rom. 8 : 32; Heb. 1 : 5; John 5 : 17, 18.

But this great truth, you are well aware, does by no means rest on any two or three isolated passages. As it lies at the foundation of the scheme of human redemption, so it pervades and quickens as a living spirit the whole mass of revelation. When, however, it pleased 'God, who at sundry times and in divers manners had spoken in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, in these last days to speak unto us by His Son,'* it was fitting that He, to whose Divine glory those prophets had by God's command borne witness, should at His introduction to the world be thus similarly accredited by the direct and crowning testimony of God Himself.

2. In the second place, the 'voice from the excellent glory' proclaimed Jesus Christ as the object of the Father's supreme, ineffable love. 'This is my Son, *the Beloved, in whom I*'—even I; I, whoever else despises and rejects Him†—'*am well pleased*,' and, as the original may be understood to intimate, was so from eternity.‡

(1.) As the eternal Son, He is necessarily possessed of all infinite excellences. 'He is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person'§—the only adequate object, therefore, of the Father's infinite love.

(2.) As the Son of man also—'the Man Christ Jesus'‖—He was humanity's fairest fruit, the perfection of all that in the beginning of the creation drew the complacent eye of God.

(3.) But we may believe that the heavenly voice had reference mainly, not to either of the two natures separately, that were united in the person of our Lord, but to His entire person and work as the 'Mediator between God and men.' As such, He was the faithful Executor of the Father's will—'doing always those things that pleased' Him. The Divine law had been insulted, and He came to magnify it, and make it honorable, by a life of spotless obedience, and by the effectual atonement of His death. A world which God had made for the special manifestation of His glory had been turned away

* Heb. 1 : 1, 2. † The emphatic ἐγώ.
‡ Such, Alford suggests, may be the force of the aorist εὐδόκησα.
§ Heb. 1 : 3. ‖ 1 Tim. 2 : 5.

from His knowledge and service, carried over to the side of His enemies, and was now filled with all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, worshipping and serving the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. And for this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy these works of the devil, by declaring God anew to men—by Himself enduring the curse, and so repealing it—by receiving and dispensing the fulness of the Spirit—giving to as many as received Him power to become the sons of God—and finally by abolishing death, casting out the usurper, and accomplishing the eternal purpose of God in the creation of the new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. ‡

Such was the work given Him to do, and which, with all the sufferings and sacrifices that it involved, He joyfully undertook. 'Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God!'—the shout with which He alighted on the scene of His conflicts and sorrows—was not the outcry of a reluctant victim of superior power, but the deliberate, resolute utterance of filial loyalty. And here again, as before at the very outset of His career, it is answered by the proclamation of the Father's confidence, and love, and joy. 'Therefore,' said He, 'doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again.' And 'as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself, and hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man.' In other words, as it was because of our Lord's voluntary humiliation, even to the suffering of death, that God also hath highly exalted Him, and crowned Him with glory and honor, so at His first appearance in our nature, bearing its sin and curse, He is, if we may so speak, exultingly hailed, and commended to the faith and adoration of the world. Nay, this voice direct from the throne—what was it but the New Testament application of the ancient oracle by Isaiah: 'Behold my Servant,

* The reader would do well to trace out the Scriptural proof of the above statement in such texts as these: Is. 42 : 21; John 1 : 12, 18; 3 : 34; 8 : 29; 16 : 7; Rom. 1 : 18, 25; Gal. 3 : 13; 1 Tim. 2 : 5; 2 Tim. 1 : 10; 2 Pet. 3 : 13; 1 John 3 : 8; Rev. 20 : 2, 3; 21 : 1, 5; 22 : 3.

whom I uphold ; mine Elect, in whom my soul delighteth ; I have put my Spirit upon Him : He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench : He shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till He have set judgment in the earth : and the isles shall wait for His law.' That is, in the personal character of the Messiah, and in His saving work and victorious might as the world's Redeemer, God finds reason sufficient for His loving the Son, and being in Him well pleased. *

3. But I conceive there is yet something more in these words. They seem intended to express not merely the dignity of the Son, and the Father's love and joy in Him, but the Divine placability and benignity, for His sake, to the world of transgressors. They are an assurance to all that hear, that, though God was angry with us, yet, now that He looks on the face of His Anointed, His anger is turned away, and He waits to be gracious unto us, and to comfort us. They are an authoritative confirmation of the song of angels over the manger of Bethlehem : ' Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.' They are the very Gospel that Apostles were sent forth to preach, ' to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.' They teach us that the great love which the Father hath to the Son overflows on all that belong to that Son. God beholds them in Him, and is well pleased with them also for His righteousness' sake. They ' are accepted in the Beloved.' †

On many grounds, therefore, there was good reason why the Apostle should add to his record of so momentous an announcement the solemn authentication of the 18th verse : '*And this voice we*'—I myself and my two companions—'*heard borne from heaven, being with Him on the holy mount.*' ‡

* Ps. 40 : 7, 8 ; Matt. 3 : 17 ; John 10 : 17 ; 5 : 26, 27 ; Phil. 2 : 8, 9 ; Heb. 2 : 7 ; Is. 42 : 1–4.

† Luke 2 : 14 ; 2 Cor. 5 : 19 ; Is. 42 : 21 ; Eph. 1 : 6.

‡ Καὶ ταύτην τὴν φωνὴν ἡμεῖς (emphatic) ἠκούσαμεν ἐξ οὐρανοῦ (Sin. ἐκ τοῦ οὐρα-

It reminds one of the similar affidavit, if we may so say, of the Apostle John to the fact of the blood and water issuing from the pierced side of the dead Saviour: 'And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true, and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.'*

It is of no consequence that we should be able to determine on what particular mountain this great transaction took place; whether, according to the old tradition, on Mount Tabor, or, according to some modern scholars and travellers, on Mount Hermon. Whichever it was, it was ever after '*the holy mountain*,' for those at least who knew what had transpired on its summit.†

Let me now, in conclusion, note a few thoughts suggested by the whole passage.

1. And, in the first place, we may well adore the condescension of God, that, over and above all the other manifold and infallible evidences of the truth of Christianity, He should Himself, as it were, rise up from His throne, and stoop down to earth, and add the seal of His own audible testimony. Learn, then,

2. Secondly, how great is the security of the Christian's faith. Well might the first preachers feel that they 'ought to speak boldly.' And well is it with their successors in that work, when, in making known Christ to men, they too can speak with the assurance of a personal knowledge of Christ, saying: 'God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the know-

νοῦ) *ἐνεχθεῖσαν, σὺν αὐτῷ ὄντες ἐν τῷ ὄρει τῷ ἁγίῳ* (Alford, *τῷ ἁγίῳ ὄρει*)—The grammatical connection of this verse with the one preceding is broken by the intervention of *φωνῆς . . . εὐδόκησα* (Winer, De Wette, Huther, etc.) This is better than to supply a finite verb, as *ἦν*, to *λαβών* (Grotius, Bos, etc.)—V. 18 is the corroboration (*γάρ*) of v. 16.

* John 19 : 35.

† The epithet, therefore, is no proof at all that the Temple mount is meant, as Grotius supposed, who, denying Peter's authorship of our Epistle, was led to identify the occurrence alluded to in the text with that recorded in John 12 : 28. Calvin: 'Quocumque enim accedit Dominus ut est fons omnis sanctitatis, præsentiæ suæ odore omnia sanctificat:' 'Wherever the Lord comes, being the fountain of all holiness, He makes holy all places by the odor of His presence.'

ledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.' Let us all commit ourselves confidently in life and death to this mighty Saviour, in whom dwelleth the fulness of the Godhead, and toward whom is poured forth the fulness of the Divine love.*

3. Equally evident, in the third place, is the folly, guilt, and misery of those who neglect a salvation as sure as it is great. Having truth and falsehood set before them, they choose the falsehood. For what else are all men's thoughts about God and Divine things, apart from this revelation of His nature and counsels and will, but empty notions, or more or less 'cunningly devised fables'? To those who 'receive not the love of the truth, that they may be saved, God sends strong delusion, that they may believe a lie.' And then, do the impenitent ever seriously reflect that, in thus treating Jesus Christ, they are striking at the very heart of God? By rejecting, or counting as a light and common thing, this record which God hath given concerning His Son, they not merely impeach His veracity—horrible thought! making God a liar! —but they openly, daringly insult His love. And how shall they escape?†

4. Again, we are here furnished with the very best test of our adoption into God's family. Do we in any measure whatever share, or sympathize in, this love of the Father to the Son?

5. And, finally, let us beware of judging of men's relations to God from their outward circumstances in this life, or from the estimation in which they are held by their fellow-men. Here was a very poor, a homeless man, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, one whom, as had been foretold of Him, man despised and the nation abhorred—one for whom this world had nothing better than cruel mockings and scourgings and a cross‡—and yet you see who He was, and how God

* 2 Cor. 4 : 6; Eph. 6 : 20; Col. 2 : 9.
† Heb. 2 : 3; 2 Thess. 2 : 10, 11; 1 John 5 : 10.
‡ Is. 53 : 3; 49 : 7; Heb. 11 : 36.

thought of Him, and felt toward Him. The same mistake in kind is often made in regard to God's children still, and sometimes God's own children themselves are in danger of falling into it. My hearers, were search made to-night by the angels throughout this great nation for the man dearest to God and to Christ, where, think you, would he most likely be found? Very possibly not at the head of armies, or in the mansions of the rich and the mighty and the noble, or in the halls of learning, or in the chair of state, or on the bench of justice, or in the resounding pulpit; but quite as probably, I think even more probably, remote from the crowd and the struggles of ambition, in solitude, perhaps in tears, in some humble cottage of the poor, or asylum of charity, or it may be —O Divine rebuke to the base spirit of the baser sort throughout this land!—in that dark, sordid slave-hut! Children of God! brethren of Christ! 'take heed that *ye* despise not one of these little ones.'*

* Matt. 18 : 10.

LECTURE VII.

2 *PETER* 1 : 19.

'WE have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts.'

'WE believe,' said Paul to the Corinthians, 'and therefore speak.'* And so here Peter had said that the reason, why he was bent on doing what in him lay to perpetuate among his brethren the continual remembrance of the Gospel they had been taught, was his own assurance of the truth of 'the power and coming'—the present exaltation and future coming in His kingdom—'of our Lord Jesus Christ.' As this one doctrine carries with it all the rest, so on it depend immediately the preciousness of the Christian hope and the fulfilment of every Divine promise, (v. 11.) And that the doctrine itself is no 'cunningly devised fable,' but a most blessed, Divine verity, is established by two considerations out of many others that might have been adduced—by what the writer saw and heard on the holy mount, and by the sure word of prophecy. The verse before us, in holding up to view the second of these guarantees, invites us to consider first the use and value of prophecy, and then the duty of believers in regard to it.

It is evident from the whole context, and especially from what follows, (vs. 20, 21, and ch. 2 : 1,) that the prophetic word referred to is that of the Old Testament Scriptures. This, on account of the unity of its origin and its one all-pervading theme—Christ's sufferings and glories (1 Peter 1 : 11)—

* 2 Cor. 4 : 13.

is spoken of as one word, one scheme or body of prophecy. But with what is this word compared, when it is characterized as '*a more sure word*'?

It has, indeed, been sometimes supposed that no comparison is intended, but that the expression is equivalent to 'a sure word,'* or 'a very sure word.'† But this seems merely to evade a difficulty.

On the other hand, however, it will not do to say that the comparison has reference to the fables of v. 16, as if the meaning were that the word of prophecy is surer than they.‡

A much more common explanation is, that the prophetic word is represented as a surer evidence of 'the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ' than is afforded by the apostolic testimony in regard to the Transfiguration. And this is no doubt the only sense that can fairly be got out of the clause as it lies before us. But it is very far from being satisfactory. Or rather I deem it incredible that the Apostle would have admitted for a moment, that anything whatever can be surer and more trustworthy than what he himself declared touching the visible glory and the immediate voice of God, to which he had been an eye and ear witness.

Yes, say some,§ the old prophecies were surer to the Jews, and more venerated by them on account of their age. But Peter is not here speaking as a Jew, nor to Jews, nor of them. Then it is suggested that 'the appearance and voice on the mount were *transient*, and only three persons witnessed the interesting scene.'‖ But the well-authenticated record of it remained, nor was there between the writer and his readers the least dispute or doubt as to its perfect accuracy; not to mention that against a very large portion of the Hebrew Scriptures, prophetic and historical, the same or a similar objection might be urged, and that even in a stronger form. Was not the great mass of ancient prophecy, in particular, conveyed by like transient vision or brief utterance to the individual seer, and delivered to the Church on his single tes-

* Syriac, Luther, Vatablus, etc. † Arabic, Dutch, Pagninus, Bezar, etc.
‡ Though Barnes allows this as a possible interpretation.
§ Calvin, Whitby, etc. ‖ Scott, Burkitt, etc.

timony? How, then, should it be surer than what was now attested by three Apostles?

A more plausible answer to this question is, that the Transfiguration was in itself only a historical occurrence, or at the most but a presumption or a type, and not an express prophecy, of our Lord's future advent.* But this statement, it seems to me, does not bring out the full significance of the former event in its relation to the latter, nor does it do justice to the spirit of the preceding context. There the writer plainly appeals to the scene on the mount as in itself a valid demonstration of the truth of what the Apostles taught respecting our Lord's 'power and coming.' Nor is it difficult to understand why he should so have regarded it. Remember that the prophecies of the Old Testament are all over bright with the glory of Messiah's throne—that those prophecies Jesus of Nazareth appropriated to Himself, and claimed that glory for His own—that meanwhile the world, seeing Him only in the form of a servant, knew not the Lord—that the disciples themselves were not unfrequently disconcerted and perplexed by the contrast between His pretensions and His appearance—that almost immediately after that, in condescension to their weakness, the promise had been given of a speedy revelation of the Son of Man in His kingdom, the Shechinah-cloud descended, and the face and raiment of their lowly Master shone with an unearthly splendor, and the audible voice of God proclaimed His peerless dignity—put, I say, these various facts together, and you will be at no loss to apprehend the real design and import of the Transfiguration. It was an ocular confirmation of the ancient promises still unfulfilled—a rehearsal, if one might venture so to speak, in private and on a small scale, of what all eyes shall yet behold. Who of those that stood in the blaze of that Majesty and heard that Voice, or who of those that had been brought to believe their word, could ever after harbor a doubt that the crown of Messiah the Prince would yet be seen on the head of the crucified and ascended Saviour?

Now, let it be remarked that the difficulty in the interpre-

* Sherlock, Guyse, Gill, Bloomfield, Huther.

tation of this clause * arises in great measure from the translation. It is, in fact, susceptible of two renderings; either, '*And we have a surer, the prophetic, word*,' † or, 'And we have more sure the prophetic word.' ‡ Of these versions the first still yields only such senses as we have already found it necessary to set aside, whereas the idea expressed by the other, which all allow to be equally natural and grammatical, is just that to which the whole scope of the passage points. The Transfiguration was itself an indubitable declaration of the personal and official glory of Jesus Christ—a sufficient warrant, therefore, for all that the Apostles taught on that subject. And not only so, but faith now holds with a firmer grasp the staff of promise, on which she has leaned from the beginning. '*We have*'—we Christians now have—'*the prophetic word more sure*' than when all outward appearances seemed to discourage the hope of its fulfilment—more sure even in its loftiest disclosures respecting things to come—not, indeed, more sure in itself, but as abiding in our conception and in our hearts; very much as in the tenth verse we are exhorted to 'make our calling and election sure,' or as our Lord is said to have been 'a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers.' §

Observe, then, the Apostle's estimate of the prophetic word thus certified. He compares it to '*a light*,' or *lamp*, '*shining in a dark place*.' ‖

This '*dark place*' is not the dimness of Old Testament times, as compared with the brightness of the Gospel age, ** and still less is it a lower stage, as some would say, of the Christian life, when faith is yet resting on the outward word

* καὶ ἔχομεν βεβαιότερον τὸν προφητικὸν λόγον.

† Allioli, Bloomfield, Wordsworth, etc.

‡ βεβαιότερον has been taken thus as a predicate by very many from Œcumenius to Fronmüller.

§ Rom. 15 : 8 (βεβαιῶσαι.)

‖ λύχνῳ (see *Revision* of Revelation 1 : 12, note c) φαίνοντι ἐν αὐχμηρῷ (in the New Testament found only here; and so διαυγάσῃ and φωσφόρος) τόπῳ.

** Vorstius, Gerhard, Bengel, (who clearly errs in making φαίνοντι a participle of the imperfect, = *that shone,*) Burkitt.

and its evidences, instead of the inward illumination of the Spirit.* It is surely much more natural to understand by it the actual state of the world at large at that time, and indeed ever since, apart from the revealed truth and renewing grace of God—a state at once cheerless, and perilous, and helpless. 'Darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the peoples' †—the darkness of sin, ignorance, despair, death. There were not wanting then, any more than now, talent and genius, education, arts and sciences, philosophy and poetry—all the elements of a high secular civilization. But this, though men call it glory, is not 'the light of life.' It has no power whatever to expiate guilt, to cleanse the heart from an evil conscience, to renew man after the image in which he was created, and raise him to a blessed, secure, and everlasting fellowship with the Infinite Good. Not one of all the sparks of our own kindling casts even the faintest gleam into the valley of the shadow of death, or on the destinies of our race, and the vast eternity that awaits us all. On every side, in whatever concerns his most serious relations and interests, the natural man at his best estate finds himself shut in by a darkness that may be felt ;‡ and on no side is that darkness more palpable and impenetrable than when he attempts for himself or others to look out into the future. Here too, no doubt, he can speculate, and dream, and boast, as when heathen Rome proudly claimed eternal supremacy among the nations, or the Brahmin anticipates with a stolid satisfaction the absorption of himself and of the universe into the Divine essence.

But all such 'light is as darkness.' Nothing will here avail but the light from heaven—'the *prophetic word*,' which God has put into the hand of His Church as 'a lamp unto her feet, and a light unto her path,' as she advances through the gloom in weakness and fear toward her rest. Ever since the advent of Christ in the flesh, and the shining forth of His glory on the mount, that lamp burns, as our text intimates, with a brighter flame. And what now shall the Church do

* Something like this is Huther's view, and is favored also by Alford.

† אֲמֻרִם.

‡ John 8 : 12; Heb. 10 : 22; Col. 3 : 10; 1 John 1 : 3; Is. 50 : 11; Ex. 10 : 21.

with it? Hold it out before her for her own guidance and cheer? Or hide it away under a bushel, as something likely rather to mislead?* The latter, you are aware, is the course recommended, if not expressly in words, yet certainly by the example of the great majority of Christian professors in our day. And on what pretexts do they think to justify this strange and unthankful abuse of so precious a gift of God?

Sometimes modesty is pleaded, and an unwillingness to pry into 'the secret things that belong unto the Lord our God.' But let it be observed that 'the prophetic word' is not one of these 'secret things' at all. On the contrary, it is emphatically one of 'those things which are revealed,' and which, as being revealed, 'belong unto us and to our children for ever.'† That Christ shall come again, raise the dead, and judge the world, is not one of God's reserved secrets. But whence do we learn aught on these fundamental points, except from prophecy? In fact, the very words that are thus cited to discourage prophetic study occur in close connection with one of the longest and most remarkable prophecies of the Old Testament. Nor can it be forgotten that the longest and most difficult prophecy of the New Testament is distinguished from all the other books of the Bible by the name of *Revelation.* It is any thing but modesty, to stop our ears when God speaks, no matter in what tone or on what subject; and it need be, and ought to be, with no idle or irreverent curiosity, that we then earnestly listen.

Equally inconsiderate is the not unfrequent remark, that we had better leave mere matters of speculation alone, and stick to what is practical; as if any thing could be more practical than '*a lamp that shineth in a dark place*,' or the ennobling, purifying hope whereby we are saved,‡ and which derives from prophecy its very existence and salutary power. The faculty of hope is one of the most vigorous and influential powers of our nature, and is sure to make for itself, if it does not find already prepared, ways for its own exercise. Now, the wisdom and love of Him who made man are seen in

* Job 10 : 22; Ps. 119 : 105; Phil. 2 : 16; Matt. 5 : 15.
† Deut. 28 : 29. ‡ 1 John 3 : 3; Rom. 8 : 24.

His having provided all through His word, from the first promise in lost Paradise down to the closing vision of Paradise regained, the amplest scope and nutriment for this irrepressible instinct of the soul; and if devoutly to feed on that which God's hand has furnished be in any objectionable sense speculation, what is it—and this is the only and ever ready alternative—to turn prophets ourselves, and out of our own poor, prejudiced fancies forecast a future for ourselves, our country, the Church, and the world?

Then it is often hastily alleged that prophecy comes of use only after the fulfilment, when a clear demonstration is thus given of the Divine prescience and universal control. This is indeed one great use of prophecy; but that it is neither the sole nor even the principal use is shown abundantly in the history of the faithful, ever since men learned to trust God concerning things to come. Was there, for example, no immediate advantage in prophecy—unfulfilled prophecy—when 'Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house'? or, when under a like impulse, Joseph and Mary fled down into Egypt, and so rescued from the sword of Herod the infant Redeemer of the world? Nay, the patient waiting of all the Old Testament saints for redemption in Israel—on what did it depend but the word of promise, that is, unfulfilled prophecy? And so now, at this present time also, as has already been suggested, all warrantable confidence in the anticipation of the future—all the consolation of Christian hope—rests on no other basis. To lay prophecy aside, therefore, until it is justified by time and the event, is not only to affront the truth and faithfulness of God, but to cut ourselves off from one main source of strength and comfort. Instead of 'taking heed to the prophetic word, as to a lamp shining in a dark place, till the day dawn,' it is to leave that lamp lying neglected in dust and rubbish, till by and by we can bring it out, and hold it up in the face of the sun.

But perhaps the most common and plausible objection is drawn from the supposed difficulty and obscurity of the subject in some of its aspects, and from the conflicting mistakes and extravagancies of not a few of those who have at different

times distinguished themselves in this particular line of biblical investigation. To this it is an obvious and sufficient answer, that the objection, if sound, would go to justify us in shutting up our Bibles altogether, since there is scarcely one sacred page that has not been similarly misunderstood and perverted. The truth is, however, that among such as deserve to be called students of prophecy there is really a greater and a more general harmony of view on essential points, than is found to exist in other departments of theological science, nor are their divergences by any means so mischievous in their character and tendency. But be the difficulty of the study and the risk of failure what they may, nothing of that sort, it is evident, can at all excuse us from the diligent and prayerful meditation of what it has pleased God to deliver to us by His 'servants the prophets.' He sends no message to His children to mock their humble and pious endeavors to understand it. 'All Scripture'—and, if you have never made the computation, you would be surprised to learn how large a proportion of Scripture is occupied with unfulfilled prophecy—'all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.' Every consideration, therefore, that binds us to study the Bible or any portion of it, enforces the duty of studying the prophetic word. And it is well to remember that, as if to guard us against the snare of a sluggish and incurious spirit in this matter, a special blessing is again and again attached to the reading and hearing and keeping of that very prophecy which more than all others has perplexed interpreters.* Prophecy, in a word, is not darkness, but light; though rightly to discern and use it, or any other scripture, the eye must be anointed by that same Spirit by whom prophets and apostles spake.

Such, then, are the pleas on which very many even good men ordinarily defend their lack of interest in one most extensive province of Divine revelation, and I am unable to see

* Jer. 7 : 25; 2 Tim. 3 : 16, 17; Rev. 1 : 3; 22 : 7, 9, 10, 18, 19.

in them any validity whatever. Nor do they seem to have so much as occurred to either the teachers or the members of the apostolic churches. Evidently Peter had no thought that his brethren, in taking heed to the prophetic word, were showing themselves presumptuous, or unpractical, or prematurely interested in an unseasonable subject, or misspending their time on hopeless, barren riddles. On the contrary, he commends their practice, and encourages them to persevere in it. '*Ye do well*,'* says he, in that you keep this lamp of the Spirit ever trimmed and bright in your habitations. This is just what becomes the pilgrims of faith, and the prisoners of hope. Beware lest at any time it grow dim through your neglect. At no time, throughout all the night-watches, will you be able safely to dispense with it. It will at least help to keep you awake and watchful, while ever reminding you that the Sun is yet below the horizon, and that you are waiting for His appearance. Maintain, therefore, your present attitude of patient, earnest expectation '*until day* † *dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts*.' ‡

The explanation of this depends chiefly on what we understand by the 'dark place' with which it is contrasted.§ Taking that expression, as we did, to denote 'this present evil world' —the place of the Church's sojourning—we can have no doubt that the hour of dawn is at the return of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Then, indeed, though not till then, will 'the day break, and the shadows flee away.' After the long and dismal night, 'He shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds'—that consummation of glory to which, not only 'the last words of David the son of Jesse,' but, as is plainly implied in the text, the uniform tenor of prophecy from the beginning bore its glowing witness. When it comes, 'prophecies shall fail.' The lamp, no longer needed, will go out in the brightness of realization. But until it does come, we are to hold fast '*the pro-*

* καλῶς ποιεῖτε.

† ἡμέρα—without the article; which is, however, found in Sin.

‡ Bengel connects this clause with the *shining;* Dietlein, with both the *shining* and the *taking heed.*

§ See p. 192.

phetic word,' as our present 'strong consolation' and the charter of our hope.*

The addition of the words '*in your hearts*'† suggests that the writer was thinking rather of effects in the spiritual sphere than of the outward splendors of that day of revelation. Even now believers, we have seen, may be said, like the children of Israel in the land of Goshen, to 'have light in their dwellings.' But more than that, they are themselves 'light in the Lord,' and so 'the light of the world.' They 'are not in darkness,' except as surrounded by it. They 'are all the children of light, and the children of the day: they are not of the night, nor of darkness.' This, however, is true of them only as compared with unbelievers, or with what they themselves once were, not as compared with what they 'shall be,' when they shall be like Christ, seeing Him as He is. Then at last shall every cloud disappear from the firmament of the soul. '*Day shall dawn, and the day-star*'—Phosphorus, the Light-Bringer—'*shall arise in your hearts*,' and all material glory thenceforth be but the reflection of the spiritual. Now Christ in you is the hope of glory; then Christ in you shall be glory itself. 'The Lord God shall lighten them.' 'I am,' says Jesus, 'the bright and morning star;' and He says also, 'He that overcometh . . . I will give him the morning-star.' Every Christian is yet to be as it were a miniature Christ—one of innumerable lesser fires around the Sun of righteousness, burning and shining in His light.‡

1. Of the several important lessons taught us in this verse, none is more obvious than that of the right and duty of all Christian people to have and, not only read but, study the written word of God. They are to '*take heed*'—*give their mind*—to it.§

* Gal. 2 : 4; Song 2 : 17; 4 : 6; 2 Sam. 23 : 1, 4; 1 Cor. 13 : 8; Heb. 6 : 18.

† Erroneously connected with '*take heed*' by Wolle, (as cited by Wolf.) Scholz also includes in a parenthesis all that intervenes.

‡ Ex. 10 : 23; Eph. 5 : 8; Matt. 5 : 14; 1 Thess. 5 : 4, 5; 1 John 3 : 2; Col. 1 : 27; Rev. 22 : 5, (according to the now received reading,) 16; 2 : 28; John 5 : 35.

§ *προσέχοντες*, sc. *τὸν νοῦν*.

2. From this attentive consideration the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and in particular their prophetical parts, are by no means to be excluded. These are not yet, and they never will be, obsolete in the Church of this dispensation. So far from having been superseded by the New Testament, the New Testament is but the incipient fulfilment of them. Moses and Elias appear in glory with Christ.

3. Let us learn to think soberly with regard to the character, design, and issues of the present economy of grace. The night, indeed, is far spent, the day is at hand. But the day has not yet appeared. It is still night. Be not high-minded, but fear.*

4. And meanwhile our present business is to strive, like the wise servant, to have every thing in readiness against the coming of the Lord, and 'so much the more as we see the day approaching.' Other eyes besides ours are fixed on the same spot of the darkened heavens, and amid the weariness and gloom the word is passed from tower to tower, 'Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?' Does any one ask, What mean the eager, hopeful voices? The answer is, They are longing for the dawn—they are looking for Christ.†

* Rom. 13 : 12; 11 : 20. † Heb. 10 : 25; Is. 21 : 11; Heb. 9 : 28.

LECTURE VIII.

2 PETER 1 : 20, 21.

'KNOWING this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.'

A GLANCE at the context shows that the 20th verse is intimately related to the 19th. There the writer had commended his brethren for taking heed, and had encouraged them to persevere in taking heed, to the prophetic word, as being confirmatory of the truth of what Apostles had taught them respecting the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and as having itself been confirmed by what Apostles had already seen and heard of His kingly majesty on the mount of Transfiguration. Here, whatever doubt may rest on the precise meaning of the verse, it certainly seems to specify some consideration that mainly justified their attentive and persistent interest in the study, and at the same time perhaps the consideration was one, the settled conviction and steady remembrance of which was essential to their profiting by that study: '*Knowing this first*,' first of all, as what is most important to be known and ever borne in mind, '*that no prophecy of Scripture* is of any private interpretation.*' What this really means, however, is far from being obvious. In fact, the passage has long been famous as the cross of commentators.† Let us at least do our best to understand it.

* 2 Tim. 3 : 16—the only other text where γραφή occurs without the article.

† Wolf: 'Crucem fixit interpretibus.'

Evidently the great point is to determine the exact import of the phrase, '*private interpretation.*' And with regard to this, opinions will be found to arrange themselves in three principal divisions, according as the word *private* is referred to prophecy, the readers of prophecy, or the prophets themselves.

I. According to one very old and still very common opinion, what the text asserts is that *no Scripture prophecy interprets itself*, but needs light from the event or other revelations.*

To this view there are several serious objections. If no prophecy interprets itself, or, in other words, if no prophecy is so expressed as to be apart by itself intelligible, then it is not easy to see how any number of prophecies, themselves all equally indeterminate, could be made by combination to determine the meaning of one another. All prophecy, prior to the fulfilment, must be only useless and bewildering. The 'lamp shining in a dark place' could at the best but serve to make the darkness visible. It could penetrate the gloom with no resistless ray, and could shed no comfortable light on the pathway of the Church. This interpretation, therefore, sets aside one chief end of prophecy, to wit, the guidance and consolation of the children of God during their earthly pilgrimage, and is irreconcilable with the nature of faith as 'the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen,'† and with the experience of the faithful in all ages. Moreover, it contradicts the testimony of Scripture itself respecting some prophecies, as when Paul says that 'the Spirit speaketh expressly,' that is, distinctly, unambiguously, in regard to the apostasy of the latter times; and the unquestionable fact is, that very many prophecies of Scripture do interpret themselves just as readily and satisfactorily as Micah's one prophecy of the birth of the Messiah in Bethlehem, which we find was perfectly understood by the chief priests and scribes, and that independently of any help either from the event or from other scriptures.‡ Nor must it be overlooked that, were it even

* So the Syriac, (which also construes *ἰδίας* with *γραφῆς*,) Horsley, Dietlein, Peile, Brückner, Wordsworth, and many others.

† Heb. 11 : 1. ‡ 1 Tim. 4 : 1; Matt. 2 : 5, 6; Mic. 5 : 2.

true that every scriptural prophecy is in itself unintelligible, this would scarcely be alleged for the sake of illustrating and enforcing the duty, presented in the 19th verse, of taking heed to it, nor, on the other hand, would that fact itself be at all accounted for by telling us, as in the 21st verse, that prophecy was originally spoken by holy men of God under a Divine inspiration.*

II. The second general explanation, and one also quite commonly adopted, is this: *No prophecy of Scripture is subject to the private judgment of each separate reader.*

There is necessary also, says the Romanist, the consent of the Catholic Church. But as, on the one hand, we know that many prophecies have been rightly interpreted by individuals without that consent, as by Noah, Abraham, Daniel, so, on the other hand, there is comparatively but a small proportion of the prophecies on which any such consent can be found to exist. Nor does the 21st verse go to prove that it is required.

The Protestants, again, who adopt this second view say that what is needed to control and fortify private judgment is Divine illumination, or the general sense of Scripture.† And here undoubtedly we have a great principle of safe biblical interpretation. But, besides that the announcement of it as especially applicable to *every prophecy* might seem to be somewhat too absolute, it must also be confessed that the connection between it and what follows remains still indistinct and unsatisfactory.

III. And the same thing may be said of one form of the third view—that which refers the word *private*, not to prophecy as failing to interpret itself, nor yet to the readers of prophecy as unable to interpret it by their own sagacity, but *to the prophets themselves as unable to interpret their own prophecies.*‡ That these prophecies were divinely inspired is of itself no reason at all for the prophets not being able to under-

* Comp. p. 194.

† So many from Bede to Wiesinger, including Luther, Beza, Cocceius, Steiger, etc.

‡ So Œcumenius, Knapp, Schleusner, Tilloch, De Wette.

stand them ; nor, on the other hand, is it likely that the mere fact of the prophets not understanding some or any of their prophecies would be urged as the principal reason for taking heed to them, or as the main thing to be remembered by the student.

There is, however, another way of putting this third reference, that is free from the difficulties besetting all the other explanations. According to this, the Apostle had no thought whatever about the interpretation of prophecy. He was thinking solely of its origin, and what he says is that *the prophets in prophesying did not of themselves interpret the future, or the hidden counsels of God.* Now, that the verse will bear this construction I have no doubt. Indeed, a strict rendering of it would, I think, be the following: '*Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture cometh of private*'—or *from one's own*—'*interpretation.*'* No such prophecy, in other words, is the fruit of the prophet's own conjectures or calculations as to what is going to happen.†

To this solution of the difficulty I am not aware of any valid objection,‡ and it has several points in its favor, that are not met by any other:

* *ἰδίας* (translated in our common version seventy-eight times out of ninety-six by *own, his own, her own*, etc., according to the reference) *ἐπιλύσεως* (the emendation *ἐπηλύσεως*, adopted by Grotius, is merely conjectural, having no manuscript authority) *οὐ γίνεται.*—'Επίλυσις, found nowhere else in the New Testament, is employed by Aquila for פְּתָרֹנִים, Gen. 40 : 8, (English version *interpretations,*) and by Symmachus for תְּרָפִים, Hos. 3 : 4, (*teraphim*—understanding, probably, by the word an oracular response, or the means by which it was obtained. In this case Theodotion has *ἐπιλυομένου* ; and Aquila, the same form at Gen. 41 : 8.) The etymological idea of *unloosing, setting free* from entanglement, and hence figuratively of *making clear, settling by exposition*, is apparent in the New Testament use of *ἐπιλύω*, Mark 4 : 34, (E. V. *expounded ;*) Acts 19 : 39 ; and, according to some copies, in the Septuagint Gen. 41 : 12.

† Such appears to be the sense of the Vulgate, (*propriâ interpretatione non fit,*) and it has been adopted by many later interpreters, including Cameron, Bengel, Huther, Robinson, Alford, Fronmüller, etc.

‡ The more common construction, indeed, would have a preposition, as *ἐκ, ἀπό*, with the genitive. But this case is also employed thus simply by itself to express the relation of dependence or origin. See Rom. 9 : 16 ; Buttmann, § 132, 3 ; Kühner, § 273, 1.

1. It satisfies the universal term of the proposition. It is true of every Scripture prophecy, that it did not originate with the prophet.

2. It preserves the proper force of the word which I render *cometh*, and which always does carry with it the idea of *origin, production, result*, or *change of state*. In other places, accordingly, our translators represent it variously by such expressions as *to be made, to be wrought, to be done, to become, to arise, to come, to come to pass*, etc.*

3. The writer having just spoken of the 'lamp shining in a dark place,' it was very natural that he should at once and earnestly assure us, that that lamp was neither fashioned nor lighted by the prophet himself.

4. Here was a distinct and powerful motive for taking heed to the prophetic word, and one well fitted to produce a patient and reverent and docile spirit of investigation; especially when,

5. In the last place, what we thus suppose to be implied in the negative statement of the 20th verse is immediately unfolded into the more explicit declarations of the 21st:—'*For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake* as they were *moved by the Holy Ghost.*'

This at least must be allowed to be an unequivocal apostolic testimony as to the source of prophecy—of '*every prophecy of Scripture*'—and by *Scripture* it cannot be questioned that Peter meant chiefly, if not exclusively, the writings of the Old Testament, as they were then known to the Jews, as they had been transferred from the Synagogue to the Church, and as we now have them in our own hands. Here, then, literally rendered, is what Peter affirms respecting the entire mass of ancient and venerable oracles therein contained: '*For not by man's will was prophecy*'—any prophecy—any thing deserving of the name, and that has ever been so regarded by the people of God—'*brought at any time.*'† It did

* While the past tenses of γίνομαι are often used as corresponding parts of εἶναι, this is not true of the present. Here the distinction, as between *fieri* and *esse*, is, I believe, strictly maintained, and the neglect of it in some cases by our common version is perhaps always injurious to the sense.

† οὐ γὰρ θελήματι ἀνθρώπου ἠνέχθη ποτέ (see the English margin; 1 Cor. 9 : 7; 1 Thess. 2 : 5, etc.) προφητεία, (Tischendorf, προφ. ποτέ.)

not begin here. In no single instance was it the product of human speculation. It was '*brought*'—brought to the prophet as well as to us, nor had a human will, either ours or his, the least agency in that first bringing of it, any more than in the case of the Voice that sounded forth from the excellent Glory at the Transfiguration,* or in that of the sun's rays.

As regards prophecy men were simply the instruments employed in delivering it to us—the channels merely of its transmission. They delivered what they received—nothing more—nothing less—and just as they received it. '*But*,' says Peter, in strongest opposition to all idea of a human authorship, '*moved*'—*impelled, borne along*, like ships before a breeze—'*by the Holy Ghost, spake holy men of God*'—or, as some read, '*men spake from God*,'† that is, sent and empowered by God to speak in His behalf, and repeating only what they had heard in His pavilion fresh from His lips, or seen in the light of His presence. The other reading, however, is in this respect no less significant. The prophets were '*holy men of God*'—holy in their relation to God, as separated and consecrated to a holy function, and used by God in His immediate service. They were also, in at least the great majority of cases, men personally holy, devoted to God's fear, and jealous for His truth and law and honor. But neither their official nor their personal holiness accounts for any one of their prophecies. In prophesying they were, so to speak, possessed, caught up, and carried forward, by the Holy Ghost. Like that Divine chariot which Ezekiel saw by the river of Chebar, 'whithersoever the Spirit was to go, they went,' and this equally whether at the time they understood their own prophecy or not, and whether in any particular instance they acted with the conscious concurrence of their own faculties or not. In each and every instance it is true of them, and it is all that is essential for us to know, that they '*spake*' under the impulse and sway of the Heavenly

* Comp. with ἠνέχθη here the ἐνεχθείσης of v. 17.

† ἀλλ' (Sin. ἀλλά) ὑπὸ Πνεύματος Ἁγίου φερόμενοι (comp. Acts 27 ver. 15, 17) ἐλάλησαν ἅγιοι Θεοῦ ἄνθρωποι. For ἅγιοι Tischendorf reads ἀπό, (B.) Lachmann inserts τοῦ before Θεοῦ, (A.)

Breath, as the organ sounds only under the hand of its master. They '*spake*'—they wrote—no more can be said of them than that. What they should speak or write, and how, were matters not within their own control, but determined for them by the Holy Ghost. Of the seventy elders of Israel in the wilderness we read: 'And it came to pass that, when the Spirit rested upon them, they prophesied and did not cease.' The same thing holds good of all the holy prophets. They were simply the Spirit's spokesmen or amanuenses, and for that reason, like Moses in his relation to Aaron, were 'instead of God' to all to whom their word came.* Their pure, calm, bright souls—to avail ourselves of an illustration of one of the greatest Fathers of the Church—become as it were mirrors of the Divine energy, reflecting the image without confusion, and unstained by aught of fleshly passion.†

The great and fundamental lesson, therefore, taught us in these two verses, is the Divine origin of all the prophecies of Scripture. And it is well for us again to remember, what is historically quite certain—nothing more so—that, when Peter and Paul speak of *Scripture*, they mean at least that same Old Testament which at this very day constitutes three fourths of our completed Bible. How familiar Christ and His Apostles were with these old writings, how deeply they reverenced them, and with what confidence they drew from them, as from an inexhaustible storehouse, arguments and illustrations in defence of the Christian faith, is apparent from every page of the New Testament. And from that one fact you can safely be left to estimate for yourselves at something like its true value the intelligence, to say nothing of the piety or the modesty, of those nowadays who think that they have long since outgrown these swaddling-clothes, as they regard them, of the infant Church. Alas! and what would they have us to substitute in their room? Nothing better than the shifting conceits and baseless prognostications of this world's wisdom, or the frozen dreams of a Swedenborg, or the inflated imbecilities and dismal drivel of our

* Ezek. 1 : 20; Ex. 4 : 16. † Basil, *Comm. in Esaiam*, Prœm.

modern spiritualists! For these we are to give up Moses, David, Isaiah, Daniel, and all the other holy names!

The insane wickedness of such a course glares upon us, the moment we recover a firm hold on the principle urged in the text, that here—here and nowhere else—we have 'not the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God.' The power of that very promise which the Lord gave His Apostles for their special encouragement had already been abundantly experienced by them of old time: 'It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.' In reading the Bible, therefore—the Old Testament no less than the New—we are ever to bear it on our hearts, that we are listening not so much to holy men speaking for God, as to God Himself speaking through them to us. And can God's word ever grow old? or sink into the feebleness and aimlessness of second childhood? Is it not rather, like Himself, 'the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever'?*

Nor does any one portion of the Bible carry on its face a brighter signature of Divinity than does 'the prophetic word.' God Himself glories in it as one of His most incontestable and inalienable prerogatives: 'I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.' In the same spirit is His contemptuously indignant challenge to all His base rivals of the heathen idolatry: 'Produce your cause, saith the Lord; bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob. Let them bring them forth, and show us what shall happen: let them show the former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come. Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods.'†

Yes, what neither human nor angelic wisdom could do for us has been done through the power and grace of the Holy Ghost. If it be true that His voice no longer falls in audible

* 1 Thess. 2 : 13; Matt. 10 : 20; Heb. 13 : 8.
† Is. 46 : 9, 10; 41 : 21–23.

accents on the ear—if it is not now heard, as in the days of old, speaking in visions to the prophets, or startling the silence of the skies—yet let us continually bless God that its many ancient revelations are not lost. It was for no object of slight or transient interest, that the Eternal did in former times maintain so frequent, and so direct, an intercourse with sinful men. And if the fiery shapes that crowded the top of Sinai, and praised God at the Nativity, have long since disappeared from the paths of our daily life, yet at their departure they left a trail of glory behind them, and the ever-multiplying echoes of their song still resound through the universe. Know ye that in this old book, the Bible, much more generally patronized by us, I fear, than studied, we have the sum of all the communications which Heaven has made to earth. The scattered beams, which ever and anon leaped forth from the great Source of light, are here collected as in a radiant shrine—a flaming cresset—'a lamp shining in a dark place.' And of this entire cluster of revelations it must be said generally, that they all bear a prophetic character. 'Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.'

What serious mind can calmly converse for even a brief period with this wondrous volume, and not feel itself brought under the powers of a yet future world? We stand, so to speak, in the midst of a magnificent temple, made without hands, rich in the most stupendous scenery, and filled with the odors of sweet incense, and with responsive strains of complicated and far-reaching harmonies, but of which the innermost glory is the Throne of God and the Lamb, encircled by the Rainbow of the covenant, adored by the myriads of the redeemed and the outer circles of the angelic hierarchy, and shedding a holy effulgence, that shall never grow dim, into all heights and depths of the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.*

Such, I repeat, is the Bible, and such preëminently is the Bible as God's *prophetic word.* And if Apostles said to their

* Rom. 15 : 4; Heb. 6 : 5; Rev. 4 : 3; 2 Pet. 3 : 13.

churches, 'Ye do well that ye take heed to it,' what would they say to those of you who slight it, neglect it, rather dislike to hear about it, care less for it than you do for your novels, and your political speeches, and your daily newspapers? Surely the least that could be said is, *Ye do ill*—ye dishonor God, and ye defraud and abuse your own souls.

Lecture IX.

2 Peter 2 : 1–3.

'But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.'

Here the writer suddenly changes his tone. The change is, indeed, at once so sudden and so striking, that some have been willing to regard this chapter as an interpolation by another hand. But this free-and-easy method of solving supposed Biblical difficulties, though frequently resorted to by a certain class of critics, is in almost every case utterly unwarrantable and presumptuous. Certainly the present instance furnishes no occasion whatever for calling in the help of an expedient so rude and violent, the change of tone being sufficiently accounted for by the change of theme, and by the accessions, so to speak, to the apostolic of the prophetic spirit. With just as good reason one might fall to speculating and disputing, whether the Sermon on the Mount or the divine tenderness of the Farewell Discourse could have proceeded from the same lips that denounced woes on the Scribes and Pharisees, and depicted the desolation of the temple, the rise of false Christs, and the terrible signs that shall herald the Lord's return and the judgment of the great day.

Another question that has greatly exercised the ingenuity of scholars, and to very little profit, is that regarding the rela-

tion of this second chapter to the Epistle of Jude. On comparing the two you will find that, not only is the main subject the same in both, but there is also a remarkable similarity in the method of treatment ; as in the Old Testament a psalm or a prophecy is sometimes repeated with more or less variation by the same or a different writer.* In every such case the thought naturally occurs that the one document was known to, and made use of by, whoever composed the other ; and the point in debate here is, Which of these two Epistles is the earlier ? Did Peter copy Jude, or Jude Peter ?—not a matter of much consequence, you might suppose, either way. It has, however, as I have intimated, provided not a few interpreters with a favorite opportunity for the display of their critical sagacity, or of their arbitrary caprice.† Without troubling you with details that could scarcely be made interesting, I content myself with saying that, considering Peter's position in the Church as one of its 'very chiefest Apostles' ‡ —the prophetic cast of the chapter now before us, whereas Jude's tone is throughout historical—and the express reference, as it would appear, by the latter (v. 17) to our third chapter, (v. 3,) I have, for my part, no difficulty in resting in the opinion that the chronological relation of the two Epistles to each other is such as might be rightly indicated by their respective places in the canon.

Let us then, without further delay, proceed with the exposition.

Like most other New Testament predictions that relate to the present dispensation, that which we have now to examine is a prophecy not of good, but of evil. There is not a word in it about any victorious advance of the truth against the powers of darkness, or about the continuous enlargement of the

* Comp. Ps. 18 with 2 Sam. ch. 22 ; Ps. 14 with Ps. 53 ; Is. ch. 36–39 with 2 Kings ch. 18–20 ; Is. 2 : 2–4 with Mic. 4 : 1–3, etc.

† For a fair specimen of the insolence that sometimes passes for higher criticism, the reader is referred to De Wette's treatment of this chapter. It will also be found that nearly every point in the comparison of style, that is urged in favor of the priority of Jude, is by others (as Dietlein and Fronmüller) turned with at least equal plausibility to support the opposite conclusion.

‡ 2 Cor. 11 : 5.

Church, and the consequent disappearance of the idols and all other forms of superstition and error; not one hint about the conversion of the world. No doubt, these ideas, in spite of many heavy discouragements and adverse signs, still govern to a great extent the current popular anticipations of the future. But we are indebted for them chiefly to the missionary activity of the age, and to the somewhat loose, declamatory prognostications of the missionary platform, not at all to the teaching of Christ and His Apostles. Of that teaching the present chapter is no more than a fair sample; and it needs but a glance to perceive that what it treats of is rather the entrance and growth of evil within the Church itself. It depicts the development of 'the mystery of iniquity,' * and with a stern indignation describes the principles, and character, and successes, and inevitable final doom of the errorists who should arise; and all the while the only ground of consolation presented to the faithful is the assurance of their own deliverance from the judgments that shall overwhelm the ungodly.

The writer had been striving to build up his brethren in faith and holiness on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, by whose twofold testimony every word is established. But while sedulously executing the charge to feed his Master's sheep, he by no means shrank from that other duty of the shepherd, the guarding of the flock from ravening wolves, of whose approach the Master had given early warning.† And you will observe that the mention of the holy prophets, at the end of the preceding chapter, supplied a ready link of transition to the topic of the present section, by recalling to mind the contrary experience also of the ancient Israel to whom those prophets had been sent. '*But there were also false prophets among the people*,' besides the true, of whom I have just spoken, '*as also among you*,' as formerly among them, '*there shall be false teachers*.' ‡

Never and nowhere has Satan, the father of lies, any more than God—to speak reverently—'left himself without witness'

* 2 Thess. 2 : 7. † Eph. 2 : 20; Matt. 18 : 16; 7 : 15; John 21 : 17.

‡ *Ἐγένοντο δὲ καὶ ψευδοπροφῆται ἐν τῷ λαῷ, ὡς καὶ ἐν ὑμῖν ἔσονται ψευδοδιδάσκαλοι*, (found nowhere else.)

among men. But of all his devices there is perhaps not one in which he loves so well to exert his malignant skill, as in suborning God's own professed servants to further his baleful cause. Such has been his policy from the beginning. While Israel was yet in the wilderness, their great leader, in the same breath in which he foretold the coming of a Prophet of divine authority, sought also to prepare them for the appearance, not only of prophets who should speak to them in the name of other gods, but of prophets who would speak words in the name of Israel's God, which He had not commanded them to speak. And in the wilderness itself, with the shadow of Jehovah's miraculous presence resting on the camp, if Balaam, a heathen prophet, was brought from Pethor to curse the people, there were found no less, even in the family of the high-priest, those who offered strange fire before the Lord. And so matters continued throughout all the subsequent history. '*There were also false prophets among the people*'—not merely such as the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, and the four hundred prophets of the groves, in the days of Elijah, but such as Hananiah who withstood Jeremiah in the house of the Lord, in the presence of the priests and of all the people, and the many others who, like him, 'prophesied out of their own hearts, following their own spirit, and seeing nothing,' according to the description given of them by Ezekiel, until at last almost the entire nation was turned away from the truth of God to vanity and lies.*

Nor did even the coming of Christ in the flesh, and the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, avail to exclude the spirit of error from the Church. The mists of hell were agitated, not dispelled, and Satan, as he watched the unfolding of God's truth and grace, and the shortening of his own time, only the more stirred up his wrath, and plied more fiercely his wiles and enginery of delusion. 'Beware,' said Christ, toward the beginning of His ministry, 'of false prophets,' and near the close of His life He repeated the warning with redoubled earnestness. Other predictions of the same sort, and equally

* Acts 14 : 17; Deut. 18 : 18, 20; 13 : 1–5; Numb. 22 : 5; Lev. 10 : 1; 1 Kings 18 : 19; Jer. 28 : 1; Ez. 13 : 2, 3, etc.; 22 : 25, 28; Zeph. 3 : 4.

explicit, occur throughout the New Testament, especially in the later apostolic writings, as in the Epistles to Timothy, and in the Apocalypse. Peculiarly interesting are those solemn words in Paul's address to the elders of that very church of Ephesus, in which Timothy is said to have chiefly labored, and which was no doubt one of the principal churches embraced in the superscription of these Epistles of Peter: 'Also'—in addition to the grievous wolves that shall assail you from without—'also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.' The coincidence is striking between this and the phraseology of our text: '*Also among you*'—in the midst of you, belonging to you, of your own number—'*there shall be*,' as by an indigenous, spontaneous growth, '*false teachers*,' or teachers of falsehood; just as the false prophets of Israel were themselves Israelites.* The tares were to germinate and spring up in the same field with the wheat.

I press this point as one that has a bearing on the question, before adverted to, of the relation of our Epistle to that of Jude. One consideration, you recollect, favoring the priority of Peter, was the fact that he speaks of the appearance of these enemies of the truth as something yet future, whereas Jude deals with them as having already appeared. The force of this argument some† seek to evade by suggesting that Peter himself was well aware at the time he wrote of the existence of the false teachers in other sections of the Church, but that he employs the future tense simply because they had not yet actually arrived among those whom he now addressed. The reply, however, is unsatisfactory, if, as we have seen reason to believe, the evil was to be of home growth.

It is true, indeed, that Peter's language is quite reconcilable with what is abundantly clear from the New Testament, to wit, that its many prophetic intimations of heretical division had begun to pass into history as early as the Apostles' days, and nowhere with greater luxuriance than in Asia Minor.‡

* Rev. 12 : 12; Matt. 7 : 15; 24 : 11, 24; 1 Tim. 4 : 1–3; 2 Tim. 3 : 5; Rev. 16 : 13, 14, etc.; Acts 20 : 29, 30.

† Wiesinger.

‡ See pp. 347–8.

But the prophecy reached beyond that age, and even now its significance is far enough from being exhausted.

The severity of the designation, '*false teachers*,' is immediately justified in what follows : '*men who privily shall bring in damnable*'—or rather *destructive*—'*heresies ;*' literally *heresies of destruction*,* such as must involve in destruction all who adhered to them. It should, however, be understood that during the first century the word *heresy*, which we have adopted from the Greek, seems scarcely to have attained to its present meaning of serious doctrinal error. Originally it was equivalent to our word *choice*, whether as expressing the act of choosing or the thing chosen, and then it easily came to signify the choosing of a side or party, or the party or side so chosen. Now it is in this last sense that the term occurs elsewhere in the New Testament, as when we read of the *heresy* or *sect* of *the Sadducees*—the *heresy* or *sect* of *the Pharisees*—the *heresy* or *sect* of *the Nazarenes*—and so forth ;† nor is there any reason for changing this sense in the present instance.‡ The result of the false teaching would be the stealthy introduction of sects or factions into the household of faith ; stealthy, inasmuch as that would not be the avowed object, but on the contrary, the beginnings of the mischief would be under fair pretences of superior knowledge and love, and the progress of it slow and gradual. 'By this word,' says Calvin, 'he marks the craft of Satan and of all the impious who fight under the same flag, in that they will slip in by crooked windings and as it were through mines.'§ To this style of operation we find frequent allusion elsewhere, as when the Lord described these ravening wolves as coming to

* *οἵτινες παρεισάξουσιν* (the verb is not found elsewhere in the New Testament ; but comp. *παρεισάκτους* and *παρεισῆλθον* of Gal. 2 : 4, and *παρεισέδυσαν* of Jude 4) *αἱρέσεις ἀπωλείας*, (the same word as in the last clause.)

† The other places in which the word occurs are Acts 5 : 17 ; 15 : 5 ; 24 : 5, 14 ; 26 : 5 ; 28 : 22 ; 1 Cor. 11 : 19 ; Gal. 5 : 20.

‡ Those (as De Wette and Huther) who hold to the post-apostolic origin of the Epistle, have less difficulty in here applying the later ecclesiastical interpretation.

§ 'Hoc verbo Satanæ astutiam notat, et impiorum omnium qui sub eodem vexillo militant ; quod obliquis anfractibus et quasi per cuniculos subituri sint.'

us in sheep's clothing, and Paul pointed the finger of scorn at such as 'creep into houses.' But the tendency of evil is still to 'increase unto more ungodliness—evil men and seducers waxing worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.'* And so the secret working of these errorists would come to light in mutual alienations and divisions within the communion of the Church. The rupture of the 'one body' would be but the manifestation of a departure from the 'one faith,'† and the destructive character of the schisms was to be inferred from the fatal character of the errors in which they should originate: '*even denying the Lord that bought them.*'

All deadly heresy, in the English sense of that term, involves a denial of Christ as Lord and as Redeemer, or, let us say, a denial of His lordship as founded on His redemptive work. For it is to be noted that the Greek word‡ here for *Lord* is not that§ which is commonly so rendered, but one from which, though with an aggravation of the meaning, we get our *despot*, and which is five times in the New Testament translated *master*, when used of the head of a family in his relation to his household.‖ And such is plainly its use also in the case before us, where, therefore, as in the parallel Jude 4, it is better to retain this original idea: '*even denying the Master who bought them*'—bought them, that is, from under the yoke of Satan and the bondage of the law to be His servants, and that at no less a price than His own 'precious blood.' (1 Pet. 2 : 19.) Now, as recognition of Christ's absolute right of property in us, growing out of His great act of self-sacrifice, is the highest glory and joy of all true Christians, who ever make it their boast that they 'are not their own, but bought with a price,'** so the surest mark of apostacy, and the very climax of heresy, is the denial of it.

Nor was it long in the history of the Church before that climax was reached. Again and again during the first centuries was the attempt made by the Gnostic and other sects, and

* Matt. 7 : 15; 2 Tim. 3 : 6, 13; 2 : 16.
† Eph. 4 : 4, 5.
‡ δεσπότης.
§ κύριος.
‖ 1 Tim. 6 : 1, 2; 2 Tim. 2 : 21; Tit. 2 : 9; 1 Pet. 2 : 18.
** 1 Cor. 6 : 19, 20; 7 : 22, 23.

under various forms and pretexts it has since been continually renewed, and never with a more persistent and shameless impiety than in our own day, to degrade Jesus Christ, the Son of God, from His place of Divine supremacy, while His blood, the one Divine ransom whereby the covenant of redemption was confirmed, has been accounted a common thing.*

And what, we are now to ask, has been the effect of all these concentrated and unrelenting assaults on the cross and the throne of our Lord and Saviour? That cross and that throne, planted both of them by the hand of God, stand still unshaken, and so they will stand for ever. But there is one effect that in no instance has failed to follow: '*bringing upon themselves swift destruction.*' While bent only on dishonoring Christ, and on bringing their evil principles and practices into the Church, they did not perceive that they were thereby at the same time bringing down ruin on their own heads. The form of the original † indicates that the one action is simultaneous, as it were identical, with the other. Sinning against Christ, they wronged their own soul: hating Him, they loved death. They laid wait for their own blood; they lurked privily for their own lives. They cut themselves off from the fountain of life. They became blighted branches on the Heavenly Vine—'trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots.' For them 'there remained no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.' And as their *destruction* was utter, it was also, like the lightning's stroke, *swift*—speedy, sudden, inevitable, remediless. Dying out in darkness from among men, in that very day their thoughts perished; and Him, whom they denied as their Master and Redeemer, they awake in horror to confess as their almighty and eternal Foe. ‡

Still other effects, however, of their false teaching come into view in the second verse: '*And many shall follow their*

* Heb. 10 : 29, (*κοινόν.*)

† In the apposition by asyndeton of *ἀρνούμενοι* and *ἐπάγοντες.*

‡ Ps. 7 : 16; 36 : 9; 146 : 4; Prov. 8 : 36; 11 : 18; John 15 : 6; Jude 12; Heb. 10 : 26, 27.

destructive ways,' or, according to the marginal reading now received, *their lascivious ways*—their *lasciviousnesses**—'*by reason of whom the way of the truth*† *shall be evil spoken of*.'

The strong affinity that exists between heresy and a depraved morality—the two acting and reacting reciprocally both as cause and effect—is clearly implied here and in the sequel of the chapter, and, however numerous may be the cases of individual exception, has been often illustrated on a large scale in the history of Christendom. Our own times afford proof enough that no doctrine, however senseless and monstrous, which under the guise of a religious faith ministers to the sensual appetites of men, will ever want followers. So it was even in the churches of the Apostles. 'Many walk,' wrote Paul to that of Philippi, 'of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.' Nay, some of the early sectaries, 'turning,' as Jude (4) expresses it, 'the grace of our God into lasciviousness,' are said to have inculcated an unrestrained indulgence of all the animal propensities as a matter not merely of Christian liberty, but of obligation; '*and many*,' as had been foretold, '*followed*' at once their instructions and their example. Impudently maintaining still a Christian profession, they 'in works,' not less emphatically than in word, 'denied the Master.'‡

'*By reason of whom*,' it is added—the false teachers§ or their followers,‖ or both—'*the way of truth*'—*the truth*, the one, only, saving truth—'*shall be evil spoken of*.' Very often in the book of the Acts we find the Christian discipline of faith and practice called, according to the old Hebrew idiom, a way—'the way'—'the way of salvation'—'the way of the Lord.'** Here, in opposition to the perversions of the false teachers, as well as to all the wisdom of this world, it is '*the*

* ἀσελγείαις (Sin. etc.) instead of ἀπωλείαις.—For ἐξακολουθήσουσιν, see p. 402, note †.

† ἡ ὁδὸς τῆς ἀληθείας.

‡ Phil. 3 : 18, 19; Tit. 1 : 16.

§ Wiesinger, etc.

‖ Fronmüller, etc.

** Ps. 119 : 29, 30; Acts 9 : 2; 16 : 17; 18 : 25, 26; 19 : 9, 23; 22 : 4; 24 : 14.

way of the truth'—Christ Himself being the Living Way, the Incarnate Truth*—and when such as were supposed to be walking in that way misrepresented it in their lives, the Jews and the heathen, looking on with no friendly eyes, would be sure to misunderstand and malign, or, as the Greek word is, to *blaspheme*, it. We are told accordingly that, in the second century, 'many of the Gnostic maxims and tenets being not only foolish and ridiculous, but fundamentally vile and disgraceful, the Christians were looked upon either as persons devoid of reason, and worthy only to be held in derision, or else as a set of unprincipled wretches that could not be treated with too much severity.'† Against this occasion of offence to those without the Apostles are continually warning the churches, and no one more earnestly than Peter himself, you may remember, in the First Epistle.‡

The next verse affords us a little further insight into the spirit and methods of these false teachers: '*And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you.*' The meaning is not: They will dispose of you as of merchandise for gain;§ nor yet: They will get possession and control of you as of merchandise;‖ but more generally: They will use you merely for purposes of trade**—will turn the Church of God itself into a market, as the Temple was by those who had no higher interest to prosecute within its sacred precincts than the sale of oxen and sheep and doves. But here was to be a traffic even more impious and abominable than that which kindled the wrath of the Son of God, jealous for His Father's honor—a traffic, not in the beasts that perish, but, like that of the Apocalyptic Babylon, in the 'bodies and souls of men,' for whom the Son of God died.††

The impelling motive is in both cases the same. '*In* ‡‡

* John 14 : 6. † Mosheim's *Historical Commentaries*, Cent. ii. § 41.
‡ 1 Tim. 6 : 1; Tit. 2 : 5; James 2 : 7; 1 Pet. 2 : 12; 3 : 16.
§ As ἐμπορεύομαι is used by the LXX. at Hos. 12 : 1.
‖ So at Prov. 3 : 14.
** Comp. James 4 : 13—the only other text where the word occurs.
†† John 2 : 14; Ps. 49 : 12; Rev. 18 : 13, (see the *Revision;*) Rom. 14 : 15.
‡‡ ἐν.

covetousness'—such is Peter's phrase, not *through*, but living and moving in an atmosphere of greed—these men were to ply their horrid commerce; and this feature of their character, which reappears at the 14th and 15th verses, is no less prominent in the companion picture by Jude, (11, 16.) Again and again Paul put his indignant brand on this same characteristic of some with whom already he himself had to contend—men who 'supposed that gain was godliness, teaching things that they ought not for filthy lucre's sake, serving not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly.'* Nor can any one need to be told of the gigantic fulfilment of our Apostle's word throughout the ages of the Roman apostasy, and in the perhaps still more sordid practices of many deceivers now abroad in the world.

In every such instance, moreover, one main instrument of the deception has been what Peter calls '*feigned words*'—speeches craftily moulded† for the purpose, both as to matter and manner, 'good words and fair speeches, enticing words,' the product wholly of human art, having, it may be, a 'show of wisdom,' but without any foundation in historic truth, and empty of all Divine life and power.‡ Some of these words we shall have occasion to advert to more distinctly by and by.

Meanwhile, the Apostle again interrupts his description of the men, with a reassertion of their coming doom. '*Whose judgment now of a long time*'—or, more literally, *for whom the judgment from of old*§—'*lingereth not, and their destruction* ‖ *slumbereth not.*'

For these and all other such wicked men there is a *judgment—the* very *judgment* suited to their character and crimes—'from eternity ordained, and foretold in Holy Writ,'** the execution of which must be '*their destruction.*' Long ago, that

* 1 Tim. 6 : 5; Tit. 1 : 11; Rom. 16 : 18.

† πλαστοῖς (in the New Testament only here) λόγοις.

‡ Rom. 16 : 18; Col. 2 : 4, 23.

§ οἷς τὸ κρίμα ἐκπαλαι. In ch. 3 : 5 is the only other New Testament instance of ἐκπ.

‖ As in v. 1. ** Estius. Comp. Jude 4.

judgment started on its destroying path, and the fate of sinning angels, and the deluge, and the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, were but incidental illustrations of its power, nor has it ever since '*lingered*,' as if now it had no work on hand,* or for a moment '*slumbered*' on the way. It advances still, strong and vigilant as when first it sprang from the bosom of God, and will not fail to reach the mark to which it was pointed '*from of old*.' †

And shall such indeed, you may now ask, be the end of any that were '*bought*' by the blood of the cross? The suggestion is as natural as it is startling, and accordingly there is perhaps no text that is more confidently relied on by the advocates of what is called universal redemption.‡ And true it is that, if this passage and a few others such were all that we had to guide us in the consideration of the question, there would probably never have been any question on the subject at all. But it must be admitted, and it is what those who have the most deeply pondered the matter will be the least likely to deny, that neither view is free from difficulties, which may not find their satisfactory solution in the present state of dimness and partial knowledge. We cannot here enter on an extended theological discussion. Only, by way of check to the hasty dogmatism that thinks by a one-sided reference to two or three phrases to decide so grave a dispute, and to neutralize the various texts and arguments that go to sustain the doctrine of a limitation, not certainly in the intrinsic value of the atonement, but in the purpose of grace therein, it is sufficient to object to any such summary procedure that even the present passage may possibly admit of a perfectly reasonable interpretation on that view, by applying to it a principle that everywhere pervades apostolic address to the churches. Those churches, we know, contained many unworthy members; yet, because of the profession common to all, what was true only of the faithful is, for the purposes of ministerial warning and exhortation, continually assumed

* οὐκ ἀργεῖ. † Comp. *Lect. on Thess.* p. 80.

‡ Barnes: 'This one passage demonstrates the doctrine of general atonement.'

to be true of all, as that they were chosen by God, before the world began, redeemed by Christ, sanctified by the Holy Spirit, and heirs of eternal life. For example, some of these same false teachers were in all probability among those addressed in the First Epistle (1 : 18, 19) as having been 'redeemed from their vain conversation with the precious blood of Christ,' and they may have been glanced at in the first chapter of the present Epistle, where the writer speaks of such as might 'forget the cleansing away of their old sins,' * and there is no doubt that he refers to them toward the close of this second chapter as having 'known the way of righteousness,' and 'escaped the pollutions of the world' through that knowledge. Nor should the fact by any means be overlooked that, for these important religious attainments and opportunities, they were indebted solely to Christ's grace and gospel. So far as it went, there was in their case also a real redemption from idolatry, ignorance, and fleshly lusts. But all this is very far from proving that the Saviour died for them in any such sense as that in which 'the Good Shepherd gave His life for the sheep.' †

There are, however, many other inferences that may be safely drawn from these verses.

1. They teach us the futility of insisting, as has sometimes been done, on having even now what might be called a pure Church. 'It must needs be,' said our Lord, 'that offences come.' And said Paul: 'There must be also heresies'—that is, divisions, sects, factions—'among you.' ‡ But

2. It is none the less the duty of the friends of truth and righteousness to maintain the spirit of a vigilant and strenuous resistance to the assaults of error and corruption. The apostolic writings are full of warnings on that subject.

3. That a doctrine or a practice has many followers, even among church members, affords but a poor presumption that it deserves to be followed. 'Many,' said our Lord, 'shall come in my name—and shall deceive many. . . . And then

* Comp. pp. 383–5, and *Lect. on Thess.* p. 59.

† John 10 : 11.

‡ Matt. 18 : 7; 1 Cor. 11 : 19.

shall many be offended. . . . And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.' * How significant and solemn is this calm and repeated announcement of the multitude of the deceivers and their dupes from the lips of Him who was the Wisdom and Word of God, and the despised and rejected of men!

4. Another point which the Apostle, both here and in what follows, labors earnestly to enforce, is the certain and irretrievable ruin of ungodly men. However, for a brief period, they may 'practise and prosper,' and though according to human reckoning sentence against their evil works is 'not executed speedily,' yet the day is really fast approaching when of them all it shall be said: 'Surely Thou didst set them in slippery places: Thou castedst them down into destruction. How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors.' †

5. Finally, let us bless God that, through the waste wilderness of obstruction, deceit, and delusion, His own holy word has clearly marked for us 'the way of the truth.' There, however few the travellers, let us confidently walk, and, through whatever perils and sorrows, we shall find it to be no less the way of safety and peace.

* Matt. 24 : 5, 10–12. † Dan. 8 : 12; Eccl. 8 : 11; Ps. 73 : 18, 19.

Lecture X.

2 *Peter* 2 : 4–9.

For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; and spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly; and delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;) the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.'

The announcement in the third verse of coming judgment on the false teachers was no vain threat. By three notable instances it is here shown that from the beginning,* and throughout the various spheres of existence, God has punished sin, and that neither rank, nor strength, nor numbers, has availed to shield transgressors from the stroke of His vengeance. But inasmuch as in two of those instances there was given at the same time an equally signal illustration of God's loving remembrance and care of His own children, when faithful found among the faithless, therefore the inference from the whole, as expressed in the 9th verse, respects not merely the terrors and the certainty of the Lord's retributive justice, but also the resources of His saving grace.

The first case referred to is that of the sinning angels.
In what their sin consisted, we are not particularly informed.

* ἔκπαλαι, v. 3. See p. 445.

It seems to be intimated in one place that the ground of the devil's condemnation was pride. And in the parallel verse in Jude's Epistle, the angelic offence is expressed by saying that they 'kept not their first estate'—or, as in the margin, their *principality*—'but left their own habitation;' in other words, they broke bounds and deserted their prescribed station of subordinate rule.* These hints, however, are of so general a character, that they rather exemplify than interrupt the characteristic reserve of Scripture on this subject. As for the opinion of some,† that both Jude and Peter were thinking of what we read in the 6th chapter of Genesis about the commerce of 'the sons of God' with 'the daughters of men,' and that they simply followed the old notion which applies the former designation in that instance to angels, it rests, I am persuaded, on no sound critical basis.‡

What is of more importance for us to know and remember is, that '*God spared not angels*'—even angels—'*when they sinned*,'§ sin being that abominable thing which He will not endure, nor suffer to go unpunished, even in the mightiest of His creatures. No sooner, therefore, did it show itself among the angels, staining the brightness of those morning stars of creation, than the bond which had held them in blessed attendance on the Throne was sundered, and they fell,

> 'With hideous ruin and combustion, down
> To bottomless perdition.'‖

God *spared them not*, even as He 'spared not His own Son,' when bearing but the sins of others. At the touch of wrath, their original strength and beauty withered, like grass cast into the oven. Great as seems to have been the number of them, God at once showed how easily He could dispense with

* 1 Tim. 3 : 6; Jude 6. † Dietlein, Wiesinger, etc.

‡ The points chiefly relied on by the advocates of that opinion are (1) the juxtaposition in which the sin and punishment of the angels stand in Peter to the destruction of the antediluvians; (2) the prominence given to the sin of uncleanness in v. 10; and (3) the τούτοις of Jude 7, which is referred to ἀγγέλους of v. 6. But it may be referred, like the οὗτοι of v. 8, to the wicked men whom Jude is denouncing, or to the *inhabitants* of Sodom and Gomorrah.

§ ἀγγέλων ἁμαρτησάντων—anarthrous, as in v. 11.

‖ Milton, *Par. Lost*, i. 46, 47.

their presence and service. He *spared them not,* but meted out to them judgment without mercy.* He *spared them not,* '*but, casting* them *to hell*'—sinking them in the abyss of *Tartarus;* that heathen word, from which comes the one employed by Peter to mark the extreme remoteness to which they were hurled from the heights on which they had previously stood—'*delivered* them'—as prisoners, into close custody—'*to chains of darkness, being reserved for judgment;*'† or as Jude (6) expresses it: These angels God 'hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.'

'*Chains of darkness*'! ‡ What phrase could give us a more appalling conception of the greatness of the change that has passed on spiritual beings, who themselves once shone in the uncreated Light, and were free of the universe, while fulfilling their Maker's word? It tells us of their exclusion as felon outcasts from their former haunts of joy, and separation from the companionship of the blest, of the horror and hopelessness of their present condition, and of the dire, invincible control in which they are there held. They are not, indeed, as yet confined within the walls of the prison-house that shall finally receive them. But, as they cannot stir one step without permission, so, wander where they may, they drag their chains after them, and remain inclosed in their own darkness,§ and on every side a horizon, black with the frown of God, shuts them in.

> 'Within them hell
> They bring, and round about them, nor from hell
> One step no more than from themselves can fly
> By change of place.'‖

* Rom. 8 : 32; Matt. 6 : 30; James 2 : 13.

† ἀλλὰ σειραῖς (Lachmann and Alford σειροῖς (A, B, C.—Sin. σιροῖς)=*to dens.* Very many connect σειραῖς with ταρταρώσας as a dative of the instrument or manner) ζόφου (in the New Testament only here, v. 17, and Jude 6, 13) ταρταρώσας, (in the New Testament only here,) παρέδωκεν (comp. Acts 8 : 3; 28 : 16, etc.) εἰς κρίσιν τηρουμένους, (so instead of τετηρουμένους all now read, except Lachmann, who gives κολαζομενους τηρεῖν (Sin. A) as in v. 9. Our English translation seems to have come from the Vulgate *reservari* through the older English versions.)

‡ Comp. Wis. 17 : 17, μιᾷ γὰρ ἁλύσει σκότους πάντες ἐδέθησαν, *by one chain of darkness they were all bound.*

§ Calvin on Jude 6: 'Quocunque pergant, secum trahunt sua vincula, et suis tenebris obvoluti manent.'

‖ Milton, *Par. Lost,* iv. 20–23.

And yet—might we say—even this were tolerable but for their anticipations of what is to come. Well do they know that they are '*reserved for judgment*,' and that the time is fixed when they too must all again appear before that same 'Holy One of God,' at whose feet, while bearing the weakness of mortal flesh, they cowered shuddering. But from the presence of His glory, and from the presence of His associate saints, whom they shall vex no more for ever, they shall then depart, not on new enterprises of unappeasable hate, but 'into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.' Such is the fate that has befallen, and that still awaits, these first leaders of revolt against the Supreme Majesty of heaven.*

The second example of Divine severity to which our Apostle appeals is that of the deluge,† though here, as in the previous reference to the same catastrophe in the First Epistle, (3 : 20,) stress is laid also on the manifestation, even in that time of wrath, of the Divine goodness, like the gleam of the rainbow in the bosom of the storm.

'*And spared not the old*,' or *ancient* 'world, *but kept Noah the eighth person*'—that is, *Noah with seven others*, eight in all, eight and no more—'*a preacher of righteousness, when He brought the flood upon the world of the ungodly*.' ‡ Mark here a threefold contrast, between the character of Noah and that of his cotemporaries—between the number of the saved and that of the lost—between the security of the one class and the destruction of the other.

'Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God'—is the simple but most honorable testimony borne to him in the original record. Long after-

* Matt. 8 : 29; 25 : 41, (τὸ πῦρ τὸ αἰώνιον;) Mark 1 : 23–27, 34; 5 : 7–13; 1 Cor. 6 : 3; Rev. 20 : 10.

† For which Jude substitutes the case of the unbelieving Israel in the wilderness.

‡ ἀρχαίου . . . ἀλλ' (Sin. ἀλλὰ) ὄγδοον Νῶε . . . ἐφύλαξε (rendered in our version as above everywhere else except Mark 10 : 20 and 1 Tim. 1 : 21, and there *keep* would be equally suitable. In three instances, indeed, the imperative middle is properly rendered *beware*) . . . ἐπάξας, (the same verb as in v. 1 and Acts 5 : 28. The *in*, here retained by our translators from the older English versions, does not belong to it.)

wards we find him named again and again by God as one of three men—'Noah, Daniel, and Job'—the most likely to prevail as intercessors for the guilty. Himself an 'heir of the righteousness which is by faith,' he preached—*proclaimed* *—at once faith and righteousness by his holy life and his warning voice, and by every blow that he struck in the building of the ark. In all these ways he 'condemned the world' around him, as impenitent, unbelieving, disobedient, '*ungodly*.' It was literally Noah against the world. 'The earth was corrupt before God; and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.'† And what Peter would impress upon us is just this, that the Divine justice does not regard majorities, but deals with men, be they few or many, strictly according to their character. He '*kept Noah*,' with those that were given to him of his kindred—covered him with His own hand, and hid him within the shelter of the ark—alone secure in that first great ruin of the earth and heaven, when He '*spared not the ancient world*' with all its gay, busy multitudes, but '*brought the flood upon the world of the ungodly*.'

The last historical illustration in our text, as also in Jude, is drawn from the cities of the plain; and here again our Apostle brings out into equal prominence the gracious features of the scene.

'*And, reducing to ashes* ‡ *the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, condemned them to* § *an overthrow*'—to utter and permanent subversion—'*making*,' or rather—for the judgment is thought of not merely as accomplished, but as still abiding—*having made*, 'them *an example of those that should afterward be ungodly*' ‖—an example not so much *for* their warning as *of* their doom.

* κήρυκα. † Gen. 6 : 9, 11, 12; Ez. 14 : 14–20; Heb. 11 : 7.

‡ So τεφρόω (in the New Testament only here) is rendered by many from Guyse to Peile. Alford: *burning to ashes.*

§ Comp. the other instances of κατακρίνω with a dative of the punishment, Matt. 20 : 18; Mark 10 : 33.

‖ ὑπόδειγμα μελλόντων (in the four other cases of ὑπόδ. with a genitive our version translates as above; Heb. 4 : 11; 8 : 5; 9 : 23; James 5 : 10) ἀσεβεῖν

To this '*example*,' accordingly, there are frequent references in Scripture—as many, I believe, as twenty-one. That of Jude especially, besides its declaration of the sin of those cities, is of use in explaining the phrase before us in regard to their punishment: 'Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them, having given themselves over in like manner as they to fornication, and gone away * after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.' In other words, the fire that consumed those guilty cities was really a blazing forth of the 'eternal fire,' (taking the word even in its strongest sense,) because it was immediately from God as the minister of His wrath ; † because, as such, it was irresistible and unquenchable ; ‡ and because of the utter desolation wrought by it §—a desolation, in so far at least and so long ‖ as it shall be needed as 'an example,' perpetual and remediless.** As late as the fourth century of the Christian era, we hear the great preacher of the Eastern Church exclaiming, at the close of a vivid description of the blighted region: 'All unfruitful, all barren, all an image of the former wrath, a pledge of that which is to come!' †† And in our own day it is even a disputed question, where Sodom and Gomorrah stood. On all these accounts their fate is peculiarly fitted to serve as one of the historical precursors and preluding exhibitions of the fate of the ungodly, when the world that now is shall perish, not by water, but by the 'fire' that shall 'go before' the Judge, 'and burn up His enemies round about.' ‡‡

(occurs once again at Jude 15) *τεθεικώς*, (comp. *τετήρηκεν* and *πρόκεινται* of Jude 6 and 7.)

* *τὸν ὅμοιον τούτοις* (see p. 989, note 3) *τρόπον ἐκπορνεύσασαι καὶ ἀπελθοῦσαι κτλ.* See the *Revision*.

† Gen. 19 : 24 ; Ps. 11 : 6 ; Is. 30 : 33 ; 66 : 15, 16 ; Rev. 20 : 9.

‡ Gen. 19 : 25 ; Ps. 97 : 3 ; Is. 27 : 4 ; 66 : 24 ; Jer. 49 : 18 ; Mal. 4 : 1 ; Mark 9 : 43, etc. ; Heb. 12 : 29 ; Rev. 19 : 3.

§ See the passages last cited. ‖ Ez. 16 : 53, 55.

** Is 13 : 19, 20 ; Jer. 50 : 39, 40 ; Zeph. 2 : 9, (Sept. *εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.*)

†† Chrysostom, viii. *Hom. on* 1 *Thess.* : *πάντα ἄκαρπα, πάντα ἄγονα, πάντα τῆς προλαβούσης ὀργῆς εἰκόνες, τῆς μελλούσης τεκμήρια.* Comp. 3 Macc. 2 : 5 : *Σὺ τοὺς . . Σοδομίτας . . κατέλούσης τεκμήρια.—Φλεξας, παράδειγμα τοῖς ἐπινενομένοις καταστήσας.*

‡‡ Ps. 97 : 3 ; 50 : 3.

But now behold once more the goodness and faithfulness of God, 'in wrath remembering mercy.'* Somewhat closely rendered, the next two verses might be read thus: '*And delivered righteous* † *Lot, worn down* ‡ *with the filthy behavior* § *of the lawless:* ‖ *(for in seeing and hearing did the righteous man, dwelling among them, day after day torment his righteous soul with their unlawful deeds.')***

To what extent, if at all, the nephew of Abraham was blameworthy in prolonging his stay for years in a wicked region, to which he had, indeed, been at first attracted by the mere prospect of secular advantage, we have no means of judging. But, whatever may have been his fault, he suffered for it grievously. It is certain that Lot was really a good man, who, beset on all hands by the most flagrant abominations, and without the sympathy or support of neighbors or kindred like-minded with himself, maintained faith in God, and led a sober and righteous life. Nor was his sense of the evil around him dulled, as might well have been supposed, by long familiarity with it. On this point the language before us is singularly emphatic. It speaks of him as '*worn down*,' wearied out, oppressed in spirit, by the licentiousness of a population which had burst asunder and openly cast aside all restraints of the Divine law, of nature, and of conscience. He 'beheld the transgressors, and was grieved.'†† Nor was his resistance to the general corruption wholly passive. He did not withdraw from the society of men, and only weep for

* Hab. 3 : 2.

† So our version renders *δίκαιος* (the word employed by the LXX. throughout Gen. 18 : 23–28) twice in v. 8, and thirty-eight times elsewhere. The very needless variation in this context began with Tyndale.

‡ *καταπονούμενον*—once again at Acts 7 : 24, *(oppressed.)*

§ *ἐν ἀσελγείᾳ (wantonness, lasciviousness*, as in v. 2 and 1 Pet. 4 : 3) *ἀναστροφῆς*, (see p. 152.)

‖ *ἀθέσμων*—occurs only here and 3 : 17, and in neither place is there any reason for concealing its strict meaning. Rather, there is in the context special reason for retaining it.

** *βλέμματι γὰρ καὶ ἀκοῇ* (erroneously connected with *δίκαιος* by the Vulgate, Erasmus, and others) *ὁ δίκαιος, ἐγ*-(Sin. *ἐν*-)-*κατοικῶν ἐν αὐτοῖς, ἡμέραν ἐξ ἡμέρας ψυχὴν δικαίαν ἀνόμοις ἔργοις ἐβασάνιζεν.* Comp. the *ἐτάραξεν ἑαυτόν* of John 11 : 33.

†† Ps. 119 : 53, 139, 158.

them in secret places. Without trusting to the Jewish tradition that Lot held the office of a judge in Sodom, we infer from our text that he was in the habit of going freely abroad in the city, and that, while thus voluntarily subjecting himself to unceasing daily torture from all that he there saw and heard, he kept up a perpetual though unavailing protest, by word as well as by his own purer walk and conversation, against the foul, blasphemous speeches and '*unlawful deeds*.'

And so, when the day of crisis came at last, his fidelity also had its reward. 'The Lord, being merciful unto him,' sent down His angels, and by their hands '*delivered righteous Lot*.' Nor, until 'Lot entered into Zoar,' could the fiery judgment descend.*

At the 9th verse we have the conclusion to be drawn from all that has been said. That conclusion is first stated in general terms, and then the 10th verse applies it to the case in hand.

If 'angels that excel in strength,' the antediluvian world with its races of 'giants' and 'mighty men—men of renown,' and the flourishing cities of the plain that was as 'the garden of the Lord' ‡—if, in a word, all history shows that offending creatures of every name and degree, no matter how powerful, numerous, or seemingly prosperous, have hitherto perished helplessly and utterly in the wrath of God, while those, on the other hand, whose ways have pleased Him, have been safe in the time of its most appalling manifestation—then it clearly follows, as something that may be relied on with all confidence, that '*the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation*,§ *but the unrighteous to reserve under punishment* ‖

* Gen. 19 : 16, 23–25.

† I see not the least ground, therefore, for the opinion of Pareus, which has been revived by Rosenmüller, Winer, De Wette, and others, that the construction with which the writer started at v. 4 is left incomplete, having broken down in consequence of the accumulation of clauses.

‡ Ps. 103 : 20; Gen. 6 : 4; 13 : 10.

§ *πειρασμοῦ*, (Sin.[1] *πειρασμῶν*.) This word occurs seventeen times in the singular, and only in this instance appears in our version as a plural. What may have been at first merely an error of the press has kept its place in all subsequent editions that I have looked into.

‖ *ἀδίκους δὲ* (Sin.[1] adds *πεφυλακισμένους*) . . . *κολαζομένους τηρεῖν*.

unto the day of judgment;' and if He '*knoweth how*' to do these two things, it may be assumed for certain that He *will* do both.*

You will observe that where our English version speaks of the unjust being 'reserved unto the day of judgment *to be punished*,' † as if their punishment would not begin till then, I understand the Apostle to speak of them as being now *under punishment*. There can be no doubt that the latter idea is the one naturally suggested by the original, nor is there any necessity for forcing the other into it. The sense yielded by a strict adherence to the present time accords with the representations of the preceding verses, and of the parallel verses of Jude, which alike set forth a preliminary and continuous punishment of the wicked, besides that which shall be awarded to them at the last day. Indeed, nothing admits of easier proof than that the doctrine of an intermediate state, both of blessedness and of suffering, before the resurrection and final judgment, is one every way reasonable and scriptural.‡

Among the many lessons suggested by the passage we have been considering, I shall here note only the following:

1. The sentimental view of the character of God, as 'a God all mercy,' is as false to Scripture as it is repugnant to the instincts of our nature, and at variance with universal experience. All three concur in 'saying to the righteous, that it shall be well with him: for they shall eat the fruit of their

* Bengel: '*Novit*, et meminit . . . De *voluntate* Dei, dubium non est.'

† Ever since the Vulgate, *cruciandos* versions and commentaries have generally concurred in making κολαζομένους=κολασθησομένους — an exegetical license, which Bengel's suggestion, 'futurum: et tamen præsens, quia pœna certa et imminens, v. 3,' is not sufficient to warrant. This use of the present participle is with reason denied by Winer, whose own explanation, however, which finds the idea of futurity in the τηρεῖν and then makes κολαζομένους τηρεῖν=τηρεῖ (ὥστε) κολάζειν (κολάζεσθαι) is still more unsatisfactory.—In support of the above interpretation may be cited the Syriac (though it is given, at least unnecessarily, in the sense of the Vulgate by the Latin version, Murdock, and Bloomfield, (who also errs in quoting here from 'the Pesch. Syr.,' which does not contain this Epistle,) Beza, the Dutch margin and note, Cocceius, Hammond, Huther, Wordsworth, Wiesinger.

‡ See Calvin on v. 4.

doings. Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him.' And the echo of that voice in its twofold utterance shall resound for ever.

2. There are very many questions which may be started in regard to the doctrines and the prophecies of the Bible, to which our best and sufficient answer is, '*the Lord knoweth how.*'

3. The heinousness of the guilt of heretical schism, and its attendant immoralities, in the Church of God may be learned from the class of offences and punishments that are employed to illustrate its character and doom. The angelic pride, the antediluvian violence and corruption and unholy mixture of good and evil, the Sodomite licentiousness and security in sin, while environed by the hidden fires of wrath, all of them, alas! abound this day in Christendom. Now remember the solemn saying of Christ, 'But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea,'* and must we not tremble to think of what shall be the end of these things?

4. Let us maintain a steadfast testimony for whatever is good and true, and not suffer ourselves, on the one hand, to be disconcerted by the charge of singularity, nor, on the other hand, to take encouragement from the multitude around us in doing evil. Noah in all the wide world and Lot in Sodom were both singular men. But in that precisely lay their honor and their safety. 'It is better,' says one, 'to be in the ark with a few, than to be drowned with the rest for company.' †

5. As God has many arrows in His quiver for the destruction of His enemies, so likewise innumerable methods for the deliverance of His children. With every temptation He 'also makes a way to escape, that they may be able to bear it.' ‡

6. And, finally, let us not forget that our blessed Lord Himself again and again forewarned His disciples of a fatal resemblance between the days of Noah and of Lot and the closing period of this dispensation—a resemblance that shall hold

* Matt. 18 : 6. † Philip Henry. ‡ Lam. 3 : 13 ; 1 Cor. 10 : 13.

good in respect both of the wide-spread ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, and the suddenness and terribleness of the Divine vengeance. 'As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.'*

* Luke 17 : 26–30; Matt. 24 : 37–39.

Lecture XI.

2 *PETER* 2 : 10–16.

'But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord. But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption; and shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children: which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; but was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet.'

From various notable instances of swift and exact retribution in God's past dealings both with angels and men, the Apostle had inferred as part of his general conclusion, that 'the Lord knoweth how . . . to reserve the unrighteous under punishment unto the day of judgment.' This conclusion, so amply sustained by the history of the universe, is now hurled as a wreathed thunderbolt directly at the false teachers, whose appearance had been foretold in the first verse, and whose portrait is completed to full length in the remainder of the chapter.

In that portrait we may say that there are four features especially prominent: the denial of Christ, sensuality, greed, and a profane, arrogant lawlessness in speech and act; while throughout the whole the very darkest colors are used, and

the horror of the canvas is lighted only by the intermingling fires of wrath.

Much account has sometimes been made of the fact that the parties described are spoken of no longer in the future tense, but as if then present. This, however, admits of a very simple explanation. To some extent, no doubt, they really were so; but not less so, to the writer's spiritual vision, was the same evil as afterwards developed into more appalling proportions. In regard, therefore, to that also he employs what is called the prophetic present.*

'*But chiefly those*'—whatever other transgressors may dream of baffling the resources of the Divine justice, let not these delude themselves with the hope of escape; rather on them shall the stroke of vengeance descend the most heavily—'*who*,' calling themselves not only members but teachers of that Church of God, whose glorious characteristic it is that, living in the Spirit, she also walks in the Spirit,† do nevertheless openly belie their profession by '*walking after the flesh*'—following as their only guide ‡ their old, unrenewed nature; and that in its lowest and basest instincts—'*in the lust of uncleanness*.' § To this their impurity reference had already been made in verse 2; ‖ but here it is added

'*And despise government*,' or, as in the margin, *dominion*, or better still, *lordship*.** They '*walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise lordship*.' The two things, licentiousness and insubordination, are in like manner combined by Jude, when he speaks of 'these dreamers' as 'defiling the flesh and rejecting lordship.' †† But what lordship is meant?

* Nothing can well be more absurd than De Wette's theory on this point. Some unknown writer of the post-apostolic age thinks it worth while to concoct an imitation of Jude's Epistle, and father it on the Apostle Peter. The better to disguise the imposture he, of course, sets out to turn Jude's presents into futures; but by the time he reaches the 10th verse he forgets himself, and, sliding back into present tenses, shows that he is, one would say, quite as much fool as knave! Comp. p. 485, note *.

† Gal. 5 : 25.

‡ ὀπίσω . . . πορευομένους. Calvin: 'pro summo duce habent.'

§ (Sin.[1] ἐπιθυμίαις) μιασμοῦ—only here in the New Testament.

‖ Wiclif: *ordschyringe*. According to the better reading; see p. 442.

** κυριότητος. †† κυριότητα δὲ ἀθετοῦσι.

To this question the most various and discordant answers have been given, as for example, that the expression stands here for the devil,* or angels,† or civil magistracy,‡ or Christ,§ or the Godhead,‖ or for God and Christ and the holy angels.** For myself, I see no objection to taking the word in a large sense as including all authority, Divine and human,†† but with a special reference to Christ, the Supreme Lord—'the Head of all principality and power' ‡‡—whom the false teachers, we were told in the first verse, should deny. Accordingly, now that the writer enters on a more elaborate and detailed exposition of their character, it is nothing more than might have been expected, that he should revert to that fundamental and fatal sin. So far from reverencing, loving, and obeying, they '*despise lordship*'—even Christ's own lordship, as well as all reflected, delegated authority in Christ's ministers of every kind. Scorning restraint, they 'break His bands asunder, and cast away His cords from them.' Their most cherished feeling is, 'Who is Lord over us?' §§

It is this point of blasphemous audacity that is still insisted on in what immediately follows: '*Presumptuous* are they, *self-willed; they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities*,' or, if we omit what our translators have supplied, and keep close to the original—*Daring men, self-willed*—perhaps as if we should say, *self-willed bravoes—they tremble not while blaspheming, or railing at, glories.*‖‖ And here we meet with very much the same diversity of opinion as to what we are to understand by *dignities* or *glories*, as in the previous case of *government* or *lordship*; some*** taking it to mean earthly rulers and magistrates; others,††† the bad angels; others,‡‡‡ the

* Bengel, Besser. This notion rests on no better foundation than the mistake of making the interpretation of Peter depend on the interpretation—and that, I believe, an erroneous interpretation—of Jude 8, 9.

† De Wette, etc. ‡ Calvin, Bloomfield, Clarke, Barnes, etc.

§ Wiesinger. ‖ Huther. ** Dietlein.

†† Stier, Fronmüller. ‡‡ Col. 2 : 10. §§ Ps. 2 : 3; 12 : 4.

‖‖ *τολμηταὶ*, (in the New Testament only here) *αὐθάδεις, δόξας οὐ τρέμουσι βλασφημοῦντες*. According to the lexicons and the punctuation of most editions, *τολμηταί* is used as a substantive qualified by *αὐθ*. Comp. *ἐτόλμησε* of Jude 9.

*** See note † above. ††† Bengel, Besser, Wiesinger. See note * above.

‡‡‡ De Wette, Fronmüller, etc.

good angels ; and others still, the rays of the Divine glory as seen, for example, in angels,* and also in Christ. † One recent commentator ‡ even goes so far as to enumerate among these *dignities* or *glories* the Godhead, the Word, the Holy Ghost, the resurrection, the angels, earthly dignities, the world ; and he points out how each and all of these were dishonored in the teaching of the early heretics. I suppose it to be impossible to say with any degree of certainty which, or how many, of the ideas thus suggested were in the mind of our Apostle. But we shall scarcely err if at any rate we include the glories which he himself had spoken of in the first chapter, (verse 17,) to wit, 'the most excellent glory' of the Father, and the glory of the Son, together with 'the glories' foretold by prophets as to follow the sufferings of the Messiah. (1 Peter 1 : 11.)

Against every thing of the kind 'they speak loftily. They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth.' Their inward contempt for lordship breaks out in open blasphemies against glories. The very indefiniteness of the expressions seems to show that the writer meant both to be taken quite generally ; just as Paul describes the Man of sin—and the same spirit rules in these false teachers —as 'opposing and exalting himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped.' Or as John saw the Beast from the sea 'speaking great things and blasphemies—opening his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.' § The same thing these men do, and that without trembling—in tones of reckless defiance or frivolous unconcern.

In this view of the 10th verse there would doubtless have been a much more general concurrence of expositors but for a difficulty growing out of what immediately follows : '*Whereas angels, who are greater in strength and power, bring not against them before the Lord a railing judgment.*' ‖

* Huther. † Dietlein. ‡ Wordsworth.

§ Ps. 73 : 8, 9 ; 2 Thess. 2 : 4 ; Rev. 13 : 5, 6.

‖ ὅπου ἄγγελοι ἰσχύϊ καὶ δυνάμει (see *Revision* of 2 Thess. 1 : 9, note 9 and of Rev. 7 : 12, note o) μείζονες ὄντες, οὐ φέρουσι κατ' αὐτῶν παρὰ Κυρίῳ βλάσφημον κρίσιν, (rendered *judgment* in our version forty-one times out of forty-eight ; never

Evidently enough the shameless audacity of the false teachers is here contrasted with the reserve and humility of angels in presence of 'the Lord the Judge.'* But who are the parties against whom even the angels in such circumstances refrain from bringing railing judgment? Are they, then, the very same 'glories' at which the false teachers rail? And is it not superfluous formally to assure us that angels are not chargeable with the foul offence of railing at what is 'glorious in holiness'? †

Now it is to escape from this dilemma that recourse has so frequently been had to the parallel passage of Jude, who, after saying that his 'dreamers defile the flesh, reject lordship, and speak evil of glories,' ‡ continues thus: 'Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation,' or judgment, § 'but said: The Lord rebuke thee.' From this it has been very commonly, but, as I think, far too hastily, inferred that the general statement in our text was suggested by the same mysterious transaction, and that the 'glories' of both Peter and Jude, if not also the 'lordship,' include, if they do not exclusively denote, the fallen spirits.

In this conclusion, which is probably that suggested by the reading mentioned in our English margin, *against themselves*, I am unable to acquiesce with any feeling of satisfaction or confidence. It is too far-fetched, and makes the intelligibleness of Peter dependent on Jude. Moreover, the utmost that even poetry has ever conceived of Satan as he was just after his expulsion from the presence of God, is that

> '——his form had yet not lost
> All her original brightness, nor appeared
> Less than Archangel ruined, and th' excess
> Of glory obscured.' ‖

But it is not at all in the style of Scripture to speak of these unclean spirits of darkness simply as 'glories.' Nor would

as here except in the parallel Jude 9.) Lachmann and Tischendorf omit the words *παρὰ Κυρίῳ*.

* Judg. 11 : 27. † Ex. 15 : 11. ‡ *δόξας*. § *κρίσιν*.

‖ Milton, *Par. Lost*, i. 591–594.

any one have imagined, but for the supposed necessity of the case, and the help brought in from Jude, that in our text there was the slightest reference whatever to devils.* Nor again do I know of any heretical sect in church history that made it its business to blaspheme devils. The heathen worshipped them, and the tendency of the Gnostic theology was rather to exalt them into a rivalry with the Supreme God.

Various other explanations have been proposed, as that angels do not bring a railing judgment against earthly rulers, however wicked, who are then supposed to be meant in the 10th verse; † or that angels, the bad angels, mentioned just before at the 4th verse, are not able with their superior strength to bear God's judgment against themselves for their blasphemies; ‡ or, and this I regard as on the whole the easiest and least objectionable solution, that, while these miserable and weak, helpless sinners rail at all that is highest and holiest in the universe, angels, who so far excel them § in strength and power, as well as in spiritual excellence, abstain before the Lord, to whom judgment belongeth, from all severity of censure even against them. ‖ As if it were said: What fact could better illustrate the glaring contrast between the modesty of angels and the profane presumption of these wicked men?

This contrast is continued into the 12th verse, where also their ignorance, sensuality, and utter ruin again appear in strong relief: '*But these,*** *as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they under-*

* Mayerhoff and De Wette, holding to that reference, account for what they, less strangely than offensively, call the unintelligible and absurd way in which our text makes it, by supposing that the person who forged this epistle felt ashamed to use openly the apocryphal Book of Enoch, from which they take it for granted that Jude got the story of Michael and Satan!

† Calvin, Beza, etc.

‡ Fronmüller—making *κατ' αὐτῶν=καθ' ἑαυτῶν* (so the Vulgate, Luther, Erasmus, etc.) and *βλάσφημον κρίσιν=βλασφημίας κρίσιν*, (a much more questionable liberty.)

§ Besser and Wiesinger: *excel the bad angels.* Huther thinks that the superior angels are meant, according to the parallelism of Jude 9.

This reference of *αὐτῶν* is preferred by Wordsworth. All that De Wette has to object to it is the parallelism and—its senselessness!

** Sin. has *αὐτοί*, for *οὗτοι.*

stand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption: and shall receive the reward of unrighteousness;' or, adopting the reading of the later critics,* we might give the verse thus: '*But these, as brute*' or *irrational*† *beasts, born naturally for capture and destruction,*‡ *railing*§ *in*‖ *things that they understand not, shall even perish in their own corruption, and so receive*** *the wages*†† *of unrighteousness.*' In our version the parallel passage of Jude (10) stands thus: 'But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.'

What pictures are these of men, children of 'the Father of spirits,'‡‡ partakers of the Divine image, formed for an everlasting progress in knowledge, holiness and joy, and for kingly rule over all the other works of God—yea, of men redeemed from the darkness and alienation of nature, cleansed from their old sins, bearing in their own persons the seal of the covenant, administering that seal to others, called themselves, and professing to lead others, to the peace, perfection, and glory of eternity! They 'were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come.' But all these their privileges, endowments, and pretensions have only rendered them capable of a more aggravated guilt, and fitted them for a deeper damnation. Claiming to inherit seats in the kingdom of heaven higher and brighter than those of angels, they have even dehumanized themselves, have lost 'the sanctity of rea-

* Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford, Wordsworth: *γεγεννημένα* (Sin. *γεγενημ-*) *φυσικὰ . . . καὶ φθαρήσομται*, (Sin. A, B, C.)

† *ἄλογα.* But see Milton's use of the word *brute* in *Par. Lost*, vii. 507.

‡ *εἰς ἅλωσιν καὶ φθοράν.*

§ *βλασφημοῦντες*—as in vv. 10, 11, and should be similarly rendered. Here the participial construction should be retained, as the point of comparison with the beasts is not the railing. Sin. *ἀγνοοῦντες βλασφημοῦσιν.*

‖ *ἐν.*

** *κομιούμενοι*—future in form as well as in sense—intimates that this clause, instead of announcing an additional punishment, is merely an explanatory appendage of the preceding finite verb.—For this word, Sin.[1] and B have *ἀδικούμενοι.*

†† *μισθόν* as in v. 15.

‡‡ Heb. 12 : 9.

son,' and sunk down to the level, and far, far below the level, of 'the beasts that perish,' indeed, but were born for that very destiny. '*Railing in things that they understand not*'—in cases, that is, where their ignorance unfits them for any thing else but to rail, and helps them in that, like dogs baying the moon—they shall die as the dog dieth, and '*perish in their own corruption.*' For here again, as in v. 1, they are described as self-destroyed. They shall 'fall into their own nets,' and there shall they 'stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken.' The corruption, which they lived to spread around them, shall at last strike inwardly, and work out its own consummation * in their utter and eternal undoing. Thus shall 'the reward of their hands be given them.' They shall receive and bear away that prize † of shame and woe, '*the wages of unrighteousness*'—'the recompense of their error which is meet.' ‡

This fresh denunciation of vengeance is followed by a still further exposure of the corruption that provokes and necessitates it. And here we have a series, or rather torrent, of short exclamatory clauses, which have been variously punctuated and construed by editors and commentators. On these points, I venture to think, the writer himself did not take half so much pains as his critics. He looks on at the appalling development of evil within the Church, and, stirred with holy indignation, he breaks forth again in a tone of impetuous invective that makes little account of symmetrical arrangement, and which was, we can well believe, characteristic of our Apostle. As I am disposed to read the passage, after the word *unrighteousness* we have the beginning of a new sentence, which, running through the accumulation of dependent particulars in the 13th and 14th verses, comes to a positive statement only in the 15th, and ends with the 16th, somewhat in this way:

* Wiesinger refers *αὐτῶν* (*αὐτῶν*) to *ζῶα*. But this is a great mistake, and would seriously impair the force of the passage.

† The verb (*κομίζομαι*) is the same that occurs in 1 Pet. 1 : 9 and 5 : 4. See p. 42, note *.

‡ Heb. 6 : 4, 5; Ps. 49 : 12; 141 : 10; Is. 8 : 15; 3 : 11; Rom. 1 : 27.

'*Accounting* it *pleasure* to *revel in the day-time, spots and blemishes, revelling in their own deceits, while banqueting with you, having eyes full of adultery*'—or rather, as in the margin, *of an adulteress*—'*and ceasing not from sin, alluring unstable souls,* having a heart exercised in *covetousness, children of a curse, forsaking the right way, they went astray, having followed the way of Balaam,*' etc.*

On all this a few explanatory hints may suffice.

To '*revel in the day-time*' was ever esteemed a mark of shameless profligacy. 'They that be drunken,' says Paul, 'are drunken in the night.' And hence Peter himself argued the great unlikelihood of his brethren on the day of Pentecost being under any such influence, 'seeing it was but the third hour of the day.'† Not a few, indeed, of the best interpreters‡ understand the clause differently, 'Accounting it pleasure to revel *for a day*'—for a brief season, the short day of life. But to find 'the pleasures of sin'§ pleasurable, so long as they last, is not such a proof of a reprobate mind as that furnished by our common version. Nor is the sense given by many others,‖ 'Accounting it a pleasure to revel *daily*,' on any ground to be preferred.

Of these men it is further said that they are '*spots and blemishes*' in the communion of the faithful—on that Body of Christ which He is forming for Himself, and in His own likeness, to be holy as He is holy, the unspotted and unblemished Lamb of God;** '*sporting themselves*'—*luxuriating, revelling,* '*in their own deceits, while banqueting with you.*' With this it is interesting to compare Jude 12, 'These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves

* Ἡδονὴν ἡγούμενοι τὴν ἐν ἡμέρᾳ τρυφήν, σπίλοι καὶ μῶμοι, (in the New Testament only here,) ἐντρυφῶντες ἐν ταῖς ἀπάταις αὐτῶν, συνευωχούμενοι ὑμῖν, ὀφθαλμοὺς ἔχοντες μεστοὺς μοιχαλίδος, καὶ ἀκαταπαύστους ἁμαρτίας, (Sin.—τίαις,) δελεύζοντες (as in v. 18) ψυχὰς ἀστηρίκτους, καρδίαν γεγυμνασμένην πλεονεξίας (now received, after Sin., etc., instead of πλεονεξίαις) ἔοχντες, κατάρας τέκνα, καταλιπόντες (Sin. καταλείποντες) τὴν (cancelled by all recent editors, after Sin., etc.) εὐθεῖαν ὁδὸν, ἐπλανήθησαν, ἐξακολουθήσαντες τῇ ὁδῷ τοῦ Βαλαάμ κτλ.

† 1 Thess. 5 : 7; Acts 2 : 15. ‡ From the Vulgate to Wiesinger.

§ Heb. 11 : 25.

‖ Œcumenius, Beza, Dutch and Italian versions, Pott, Wahl, etc.

** Comp. 1 Pet. 1 : 19, ἀμνοῦ ἀμώμου καὶ ἀσπίλου.

without fear;' where the verbal variations are in the original even more striking and curious than is the resemblance. Thus, the word for *spots* in Jude, though in sound very like the one in Peter,* differs from it essentially in meaning. It does not occur elsewhere in the New Testament, but outside of the New Testament it invariably means *a rock:* 'These are rocks in your love-feasts;' nor is it really necessary to suppose that Jude was either ignorant of, or purposely violated this, so far at least as it can now be traced, uniform usage. And such a conjecture becomes still less plausible when we find in the same sentence another remarkable instance of what is called word-play. Jude's expression which we translate *feasts of charity* very closely resembles that of Peter for *deceits;*† and so here again a more exact agreement between the two writers has often been forced by conforming, not in this case Jude to Peter, but Peter to Jude.‡ There is, however, not the least call for any critical violence. Our Apostle may very well be understood as referring, not, at any rate not exclusively, to ecclesiastical feasts, such as the Lord's Supper and the love-feast, but rather to domestic and social entertainments. Even then, he says, '*while banqueting with you*,' when kindly feelings should be in full flow, and you are least on your guard, they '*revel in their deceits*.' As it is by deceit that they have made their way into your confidence and to your table, so they abuse the opportunity which your confidence thus allows them, for the ends of their lust and avarice.

'*Having eyes full of an adulteress*§ *and ceasing not*‖ *from sin*'—their whole power and sphere of vision occupied with some object of impure desire—fleshly lust filling up and look-

* σπῖλοι—σπιλάδες.

† ἀπάταις—ἀγάπαις.

‡ Lachmann here edits ἀγάπαις, (A** B, Vulgate, Syriac, etc.) Alford too 'has the strongest suspicion that ἀγ. is the original reading.' But then αὐτῶν also must have been substituted for ὑμῶν.

§ μοιχαλίδος—as in Rom. 7 : 3 and James 4 : 4. The reading μοιχαλίας (Sin. A and some cursive MSS.) may have been followed by the Vulgate, *adulterii.*—Œcumenius: οὐδὲν ἄλλο βλέπουσιν ἢ μοιχαλίδας. Aretius: 'Habitat enim Venus in oculis et toto vultu.'

‖ ἀκαταπαύστους. Some cursive MSS. have ἀκαταπαύστου, (Vulgate, *incessabilis delicti.*) Lachmann edits ἀκαταπάστους, (A, B.)

ing forth from these windows of the soul,* ever gleaming with unholy fire, '*and ceasing not from sin*,' from sinning themselves, (Matt. 5 : 28,) and tempting others to sin.

In this way, and as the whole aim and tendency of their life and teaching, these men '*allure unstable souls*.' Souls that have been 'rooted and grounded' in the faith and love of Christ Jesus our Lord will scarcely be ensnared by their seductive arts ; whereas souls that have not thus been 'established with grace,' fall an easy prey to the fowler.†

'*Having a heart exercised*'—practised, trained, like the competitors at the public games—'*in covetousness*'—another hateful feature, sufficiently prominent in their character to be included in the first general sketch at the beginning of the chapter, (v. 3.) And here apparently it is the abominable combination of a dissolute licentiousness with selfish, insatiable greed, that extorts from the Apostle the cry : *cursed children*, or *children of a curse!* ‡ men who, so to speak, are what they are through the curse of God, belonging to it, subject to it, carrying it in their features, heirs of it—besides being themselves the curse of the Christian community that is defiled by their presence.

All which presently reminds the writer of that remarkable forerunner of false prophets and false teachers and adversaries of the Church, the Simon Magus of the Old Testament, Balaam, the destroyer of the people, as his name imports,§ answering in that respect to the apocalyptic designation of Nicolaitans, which was assumed, either in John's days or soon after, by one of the foulest Gnostic sects :‖ '*Forsaking the right*,' or *straight*,** '*way*' of Christian truth and holiness on which they professedly entered, and in which for a time they seemed to walk, '*they followed the way of Balaam the* son *of Bosor*,' or Beor, as the name is given in Numb. 22 : 5. For

* 2 Kings 9 : 30. † Eph. 3 : 17 ; Col. 2 : 7 ; Heb. 13 : 9.

‡ Comp. Job 41 : 34 ; Eph. 2 : 2, 3 ; 2 Thess. 2 : 3.

§ If composed, according to the most probable account of it, of בָּלַע and עַם

‖ From Νικόλαος, as if=*νικᾶν τὸν λαόν*.

** *εὐθεῖαν*—as in Acts 13 : 10.

it is the same name, the New Testament form of it representing merely, it is said, a difference of pronunciation.*

Now, the story of Balaam presents a very similar combination of impurity, low ambition, and Divine rebuke and retribution. Looked up to as a prophet by those among whom he dwelt, he set himself, under the influence of the most sordid motives, to tempt the people of God into sin—the kindred sins of idolatry and uncleanness—and thereby led them into trouble, and brought ruin on himself. The Apostle, having just spoken of the covetousness of the false teachers, points especially to that same trait in the character of Balaam, '*who loved the wages of unrighteousness*,' and for the sake of them suppressed his own better convictions, and as it were forced God to let him follow, at least to some extent, the crooked way of his own heart.†

Not, however, without continued warning and resistance: '*but was rebuked for his iniquity*,' or *had a reproof of his own transgression*;‡ he who passed among his people as an oracle of heaven, and their reprover and guide. And how wondrously was that reproof adapted to the conviction and humiliation of a man who seems to have been favored with frequent direct communications from the living and true God! '*A dumb ass*,§ *having*,' on that one occasion '*spoken*‖ *with man's voice, forbade*'—*restrained, hindered*—'*the madness*** *of the prophet*,' as he rushed on the naked though unseen sword of the Angel. Says Calvin: 'It was a horrible judgment of God, that the Angel revealed himself to an ass sooner than to the prophet; that an ass, perceiving God opposed, durst not advance farther, but rather recoiled, when the prophet, under the blind

* Of the ע in בְּעֹור—a Chaldaic peculiarity. In our text Tischendorf gives *βεώρ* as the reading of Sin.[1]

† Comp. Numb. 22 : 7, 17 sqq.; 25 : 1–9; 31 : 8; Deut. 23 : 4; Neh. 13 : 2; Acts 15 : 29; Rev. 2 : 14, 15.

‡ *ἔλεγξιν δὲ ἔσχεν ἰδίας παρανομίας*, (in the New Testament only here.)

§ *ὑποζύγιον*, properly *an animal under the yoke, a beast of burden*, is of frequent occurrence in the Septuagint, (for example, Ex. 22 : 9, 10, etc.) for חֲמוֹר. From the common use of the ass in Palestine, *ὑποζ.* seems to have acquired the force of a specific designation.

‖ *φθεγξάμενον*.—Sin.[1] omits *ἐν* before *ἀνθρώπου φωνῇ*.

** *ἐκώλυσε τὴν τ. π. παραφρονίαν*, (found only here.)

impulse of his avarice, and in the face of a clear Divine prohibition, was rushing on. For the final answer which he received, that he might go, was less a permission than a mark of the Divine displeasure. Finally, it was to his extreme dishonor that the mouth of the ass was opened, so that she might be the teacher of the man who had been unwilling to submit himself to the authority of God. By this prodigy, moreover, the Lord would show what a monstrous thing it is, to change the truth into a lie.'*

Neither Calvin nor Peter, therefore, it appears, was aware of the difficulties and absurdities that our modern philosophical scepticism finds in the story of Balaam and his ass. In other words, it never even occurred to them, that what an ass could not do of itself it was equally impossible for God to enable it to do. The childish simplicity of faith had not yet come to understand, that the Almighty was now, and had been from the beginning, helplessly subject to the laws of His own making, and that, like some king of old Egypt, He lies bound immovably hand and foot within the walls of the universe which He Himself reared. The sad, conceited nonsense on the subject of miracles that nowadays goes by the name of science, really amounts to just that, and to nothing more.

To this one historical illustration of the wickedness and folly of the false teachers Jude, you will find, adds two others: 'Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Korah.'

* 'Fuit enim horribile illud Dei judicium, quod asinæ prius se manifestavit Angelus quam Prophetæ: quod asina infensum Deum sentiens ultra progredi ausa non est: quin potius pedes retulit, quum Propheta cœco avaritiæ suæ impulsu adversus certam Dei prohibitionem se ingereret. Nam quod illi tandem responsum fuit ut iret: signum Divinæ indignationis fuit magis quam permissus. Postremo in summum ejus dedecus os apertum asinæ fuit, ut illam haberet magistram qui Dei imperio subjicere se noluerat. Atque hoc prodigio ostendere voluit Dominus quam prodigiosa res sit, veritatem in mendacium mutare.'

LECTURE XII.

2 *PETER* 2 : 17–22.

'THESE are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever. For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.'

THE previous verses set forth the schismatic courses, the heretical profanity, the greed, sensuality, lawless blasphemy, and ensnaring arts, of the false teachers. In the verses now before us, while several of these features reappear, prominence is also given to their deceptive appearances, and idle, vaunting ostentation.

'*These are wells without water, clouds*'—or, according to the now received reading, *and mists* * '*driven by a tempest; for whom the blackness of darkness for ever hath been reserved.*' † The parallel to this in Jude stands in our common version thus: 'Clouds *they are* without water, carried about of winds;

* καὶ ὁμίχλαι, (Sin. A, B, C.)

† ὑπὸ λαίλαπος ἐλαυνόμεναι, (Luke 8 : 29; James 3 : 4,) οἷς ὁ ζόφος (Jude 13) τοῦ σκότους εἰς αἰῶνα τετήρηται.

trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots ; raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame ; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.' But let us confine ourselves to our present text.

To understand the import and force of our Apostle's two figures, you have but to remember the value set in that hot Eastern climate on the well of water and the cloud of dew or rain. As the former has ever been accounted a precious possession, the right of property in which is jealously guarded, and descends as an inheritance from father to son,* so both are frequently referred to in Scripture as not only blessings in themselves, but fit types of Divine blessings in general. Thus, what better description could be given of the sin of Israel, and of the race at large, than is contained in those words by Jeremiah (2 : 13) : 'My people have committed two evils ; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water'? And, on the other hand, God's favor to such as break off their sins by righteousness is represented thus : 'The Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones : and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water whose waters fail not.' Or the shelter of His tenderness and compassion is compared to 'the shadow of a cloud,' 'a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest ;' and the abundance of blessing in the kingdom of Messiah to 'rain upon the mown grass—showers that water the earth.' †

To come a little nearer, however, to our immediate topic, let it be observed that the same emblems are perhaps as often used with special reference to the teachings of heavenly wisdom. 'The mouth of a righteous man,' says Solomon, 'is as a well of life. . . . The law of the wise is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.' And He who was greater than Solomon again and again likened His own word of truth and grace to 'living water—a well of water springing

* Gen. 21 : 30 ; 26 : 15–22 ; John 4 : 6, 12, etc.
† Is. 58 : 11 ; 28 : 5 ; 18 : 4 ; Ps. 72 : 6.

up into everlasting life.' And as He stood in the temple on the last day, that great day of the feast, and saw perhaps the Levite returning according to custom from the pool of Siloam, bearing in his golden pitcher its sacred water, He cried aloud in the hearing of all: 'If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.' *

Then, for the other figure as employed in this same relation, I might remind you of the beginning of the song of Moses: 'My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass;' and of the words of Job: 'My speech dropped upon them; and they waited for me as for the rain; and they opened their mouth wide as for the latter rain.' † It is, indeed, a curious fact that one Hebrew word ‡ means either the early rain or a teacher.

Now from all this we can better appreciate the singular appropriateness of Peter's metaphorical description of the false teachers, '*These are wells without water*,' such as the soiled and thirsty wayfarer might hasten to in the vain hope of refreshment and cleansing, as the caravans of the wilderness, the troops of Tema and the companies of Sheba, repair in their extremity to the channels of the winter torrents, and, behold, they are as dry as the sand of the desert itself. 'They were confounded because they had hoped; they came thither, and were ashamed.' § And similar is the disappointment of the parched earth and anxious husbandman, when they look up to the '*clouds*,' or *mists*, bringing at last the promise of the long wished for rain, and see them suddenly vanish before the breath of the whirlwind. 'Clouds and wind without rain,' ‖ seems, accordingly, to have been another familiar image for the illustration of treacherous hopes awakened by such specious professions as should be made by these misleaders and destroyers of souls.

Turning now from the prophecy to history, we at once perceive that there have never been wanting men in the Church,

* Prov. 10 : 11 ; 13 : 14 ; John 4 : 10, 14 ; 7 : 37.

† Deut. 32 : 2 ; Job. 29 : 22, 23.

‡ מוֹרֶה ; see Joel 2 : 23 marg.

§ Job 6 : 19, 20.

‖ Prov. 25 : 14.

ignorant of, or apostate from, all saving doctrine, and equally devoid of heavenly grace, who have had but to assume a fair outside, and set up for teachers, and presently they have drawn to them bewildered souls, ready to rush, so to speak, after every shifting, illusive gleam of the mirage of the desert. Poor sinners, defiled and fainting as they are, may not detect the cheat; but their spiritual necessities are aggravated, not relieved, and a vain confidence only insures their ruin.

Once more, therefore, does the holy Apostle sound the knell of doom against these perverters of the right ways of the Lord:* '*for whom the blackness of darkness*'—as it were the innermost prison of the realm of darkness, '*darkness for ever*,'† perpetual, hopeless, '*hath been reserved*' in the Divine purpose from eternity; God's judgments for His enemies, like the portion of His children, being already prepared.‡—And then he goes on to justify this severity of vengeance, as well as what he had just been saying respecting the false seeming of the errorists.

'*For, speaking*§ *great swelling* words *of vanity*'—words puffed up into a sounding grandiloquence, but with nothing in them of the substance of truth, words as empty and foolish as they are bombastic—'*they allure through the lusts of the flesh*'—using these as their means of decoy, or being themselves held captive *in*‖ them—'through *much wantonness*'—*by lascivious ways*,** all the old forms of impurity under new pretences—'*those who were clean escaped*,' *really*, or,

* Acts 13 : 10.

† That *εἰς αἰῶνα* (cancelled by Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford, after Sin. B and ancient versions) belongs not to *τετήρηται*, but to *τοῦ σκότους*, (='ever-during dark,' Milton, *P. L.* iii. 45,) may be inferred from the time of the verb.

‡ Comp. 1 Pet. 1 : 4, p. 46; Matt. 25 : 34, 41; Ps. 7 : 12, 13; and *Revision* of Rev. 14 : 10.

§ *φθεγγόμενοι*.

‖ *ἐν*—which may be taken either as instrumental or local. Some cursive MSS. repeat it before *ἀσελγείαις*.

** *ἀσελγείαις*—as in v. 2, and 1 Pet. 4 : 3, (p. 264.) Comp. the plural nouns of ch. 3 : 11. The *much* of our English version was intended as compensation for the plural, and was, therefore, not marked in the original edition as a supplement.—The reading *ἀσελγείας* of some cursives is followed by the Vulgate, Syriac, etc., and edited by Tischendorf.

as in the margin, *for a little, a while, escaped*—or, as it is now commonly read, *scarcely, barely, just escaping**—*from those who live in error.*'

By '*those who live in error*,' † we are no doubt to understand all such as have not the knowledge of God—the Gentiles especially, wandering their several ways of delusion and death; and by those who had '*really escaped*,' or rather were '*just escaping*,' from them, recent converts to the Christian faith, not yet perhaps thoroughly instructed therein, nor established (v. 14) against the wiles of seducers. We are now expressly told, what had been more than once intimated before, (vs. 2, 14, etc.,) that the assault of these seducers should be mainly directed against the weakness of the flesh, in attempts to arouse the passions and revive the habits of licentiousness, to which fallen humanity is ever prone. But it is added both here and in Jude 16, that this foul purpose they would prosecute, and seek to veil its foulness, under the cover of '*great swelling* words *of vanity*.'

Very many such words are recorded in church history, and that too as spoken in justification of unbridled lust. Some of the more openly abominable belong to the Gnostic and other antinomian heretics of early times, when men were taught that by faith and what was called knowledge they were raised above all restraints of law and obligations of morality—became, in fact, incapable of sin, and especially so superior to matter and all material influences, that no degradation or pollution of the body could possibly affect them in any way whatever, any more than the ocean is defiled by what you throw into it. The later centuries also supply abundant illustrations of the text, as in the arrogant pretensions of Popery, the extravagances of the Libertines in the Reformation period, and the Mormon and 'free love' and spiritualistic ravings of our own day.

One specimen of the '*great swelling* words *of vanity*' is

* For ὄντως all the recent editors substitute ὀλίγως, (A, B, not Sin. ;) and instead of ἀποφυγόντας the great majority have ἀποφεύγοντας, (Sin. A, B, C.)

† ἐν πλάνῃ; comp. 1 Pet. 2 : 25, πρόβατα πλανώμενα.

given in the 19th verse : '*Promising** *them liberty*'—not liberty under law, liberty in keeping the commandments of God, and in the service of Christ, but liberty without law—such liberty as Satan promised our first parents, 'Ye shall be as gods.' † Ever since has that lie been murmuring in the ear of humanity, and it is still one chief bait by which Satan's ministers ensnare their victims. Never before, indeed, were the nations in so great danger of being deceived and destroyed by it. Peter's word is not the less true, nor his warning less urgent, because, in the midst of much false doctrine, and in the support of outrageous claims, it has lately been repeated by his pretended successor. ‡

Now also, as in former times, the futility of the promise may be inferred from the character of those who make it. How often must it be said of these prophets of liberty—these fierce denouncers of tyrants, and loud asserters of the dignity and independence of human nature—that '*they themselves are slaves* § *of corruption*'! And that this expression, strong as it is, is not too strong, is shown by an appeal not only to the understood conditions of ancient warfare, (1 Sam. 17 : 9,) but to common sense and experience : '*For by what any one hath been overcome, by that hath he also been enslaved.*' Paul expressed nearly the same thought : 'Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey?' And the sad truth was solemnly proclaimed by the Lord Himself : 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant,' or slave, 'of sin.' ‖

The terrible if not hopeless severity of this bondage in the case of the apostate teachers is described in the next two verses : ** '*For if, having escaped from the pollutions of the world through*'—or *in*—'*the true knowledge of the Lord and*

* *ἐπαγγελλόμενοι.*

† Gen. 3 : 5.

‡ In the late encyclical letter of the Pope.

§ *δοῦλοι.*

‖ Rom. 6 : 16 ; John 8 : 34 (*δοῦλος.*)—*ᾧ γάρ τις ἥττηται, τούτῳ καὶ δεδούλωται.* The pronouns *ᾧ* and *τούτῳ* are treated as neuter, the force of the statement as a general proposition being thus strengthened, by the Syriac, Peile, Alford, etc. Sin.[1] omits the *καί.*

** Applied—mistakenly, I think—rather to their dupes by Bengel, Dietlein, Fronmüller, etc. ; to both, by Besser.

*Saviour Jesus Christ, they are yet entangled again therein, and overcome, the last state is become worse with them than the first. For it were better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, having known it, to turn back from the holy commandment delivered unto them.'** All which seems to require but little elucidation.

'*The way of righteousness*' is the same thing that was previously called 'the right' or straight 'way' and 'the way of truth' (vs. 2, 15)—the one and only way, that is, in which a sinner, reclaimed from the error of his own way, becomes righteous—righteous in his relations to the violated law of God, and in his actual character and life. In the Gospel this way of righteousness is revealed to men as 'the law of faith,'† and is thus really the same thing also as what is called '*the holy commandment delivered*' unto us—holy in its origin and its aim. Now this holy commandment had been received by the false teachers; in obedience to it they had entered on the way of righteousness, and so for a while escaped from the pollutions of the world. But by and by they relapse, turn from the holy commandment—repelled by its very holiness—and are again caught in the snare of the devil. And what our Apostle then asserts respecting them is, that '*the last state is become worse with them than the first*,' and that '*it were better for them*' to have continued in that first state, when they were as yet utter strangers to Christ and His salvation. Their guilt and danger are both greater now than they were then. It can no longer be said that they sin 'in their ignorance,' (1 Pet. 1 : 14.) Formerly the shadow of the cross had not fallen on them, and they had assumed no sacramental vows therein. Now 'they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and

* Εἰ γὰρ ἀποφυγόντες τὰ μιάσματα (only here. Comp. ch. 1 : 4, p. 366, note †) τοῦ κόσμου ἐν ἐπιγνώσει τοῦ Κυρίου (Lachmann adds ἡμων after Sin. A, C, G) καὶ σωτῆρος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, τούτοις δὲ πάλιν ἐμπλακέντες ἡττῶνται, γέγονεν αὐτοῖς τὰ ἔσχατα χείρονα τῶν πρώτων. Κρεῖττον (Sin. κρεῖσσον) γὰρ ἦν αὐτοῖς μὴ ἐπεγνωκέναι τὴν ὁδὸν τῆς δικαιοσύνης, ἢ ἐπιγνοῦσιν ἐπιστρέψαι (Alford : ὑποστρέψαι ; Lachmann : εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω ὑποστρέψαι) ἐκ (Lachmann : ἀπὸ) τῆς παραδοθείσης αὐτοῖς ἁγίας ἐντολῆς, (comp. Jude 3.) Sin. ἢ ἐπιγνοῦσιν εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω ἀνακάμψαι ἀπὸ κτλ.

† Rom. 3 : 27.

put Him to an open shame,' and live to destroy the souls for which He died. For such deliberate, desperate wickedness can there still be forgiveness? This at least is certain, that, familiar as they are with the facts and appeals of the Gospel, their hearts hardened, their consciences seared, and the Holy Spirit grieved and quenched, by their malignant sin, there is far less likelihood now of their being 'renewed to repentance' * than when they sat in nature's darkness, or were bowing before their idols. It is the very case described by our Lord: 'When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first.'

'*But*,' adds the Apostle in conclusion, as if to relieve and fortify his own heart, as well as his brethren, against a possible inference from the frightful spectacle of apostasy, '*there hath happened unto them that of the true proverb: The dog turned back to his own vomit; and: The sow that was washed into the wallowing-place of mire.*' † In the Proverbs of Solomon (26 : 11) we have the first of these two forms, 'As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly;' and the other may have been equally current in the popular speech. The thought suggested by the whole verse is evidently this: Let us not be stumbled nor dismayed. 'The sure foundation of God' ‡ has not given way. These wretched men were never what they professed to be. They had, indeed, undergone a process of external reformation; but it was external merely, their heart all the while remaining unchanged, 'like

* Heb. 6 : 6; Matt. 12 : 43–45.

† Συμβέβηκε δὲ (Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford omit δὲ, after Sin.[1] A, B) *αὐτοῖς τὸ τῆς ἀληθοῦς παροιμίας*, (comp. Matt. 21 : 21 : *τὸ τῆς συκῆς*.) Κύων *ἐπιστρέψας ἐπὶ τό ἴδιον ἐξέραμα· καὶ· Ὑς λουσαμένη, εἰς κύλισμα* (Alford : *κύλισμον*) *βορβόρου*. The nouns *ἐξερ.*, *κυλ.*, and *βορβ.* occur nowhere else in the New Testament.

‡ 2 Tim. 2 : 19.

the washing of a swine, which you may make clean, but can never make cleanly.'* So, notwithstanding the purification of the word and baptism, these men retained their old animal nature still unsubdued; and what wonder, if, following their brutal instincts, they rush back to their brutal indulgences?

1. One lesson, therefore, to be learned from this passage is, that, while it does not need the example of these false teachers to prove that there is such a thing as falling from grace—alas! how common a thing is it with us all!—yet even in their case there is nothing whatever to prove that an elect, regenerate child and heir of God—the new creature in Christ Jesus—will ever again become a child of the devil, and an heir of wrath.†

2. But, secondly, since so many begin, in the eyes of men, to 'run well,' who by and by slacken their speed, and finally 'draw back unto perdition,' let none of us, whatever we may think concerning our spiritual condition and attainments, be high-minded or rest in that opinion, but, in view of the many deplorable cases of self-deception and failure, let us 'pass the time of our sojourning in fear.' As it is 'by patient continuance in well doing' that believers 'seek for,' so in no other way can they hope to attain to, 'glory and honor and immortality.'‡

3. In the third place, we perceive the blessed distinction of Christ's faithful ministers. They are as wells of living water, themselves communicating with the infinite Fountain of all truth and grace, and from His fulness dispensing to the weary pilgrims of faith; clouds, supplied from the same Source, and shedding freely their treasures of blessing, to render at once beautiful and fruitful the garden of the Lord. But, on the other hand, how great the dishonor and how fearful the doom of the unfruitful! 'Shame and everlasting contempt'! 'The blackness of darkness for ever'!§

4. In the fourth place, it will be well for you to be on your

* Burkitt. † Rom. 8 : 17; 2 Cor. 5 : 17; John 8 : 44; Eph. 2 : 3.
‡ Gal. 5 : 7; Heb. 10 : 39; 1 Pet. 1 : 17; Rom. 2 : 7.
§ Dan. 12 : 2.

guard in reference to the cry for liberty, that is sounding louder and louder over all the earth. While there is much in it that is prompted by the felt necessities of nations, and that stirs the generous heart, it is also for that very reason made use of by 'men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith,' for effecting the dissolution of all bonds in the Church, and State, and family. They

> 'bawl for freedom in their senseless mood,
> And still revolt when truth would set them free.
> License they mean, when they cry liberty;
> For who loves that must first be wise and good.'*

Beware of all such. 'Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh.' Ye are 'not without law to God, but under the law to Christ;' and therefore also ye are the only free men. 'If the Son make you free, ye shall be free indeed.' † Otherwise, call yourselves republicans, democrats, or what you will, ye must abide in the slavery of sin.

5. Then learn the degradation and loathsomeness of such a life—of a life spent in mere sensual pleasure—in 'fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind.' It is not here only that the wicked are in Scripture classed with dogs and swine. 'Give not that which is holy,' said Christ, 'unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before the swine.' 'Beware,' writes Paul to the Philippians, 'of the dogs.' And in the closing scene of the Revelation, when the heavenly guide has announced to John the blessedness of those who 'enter in through the gates into the city,' we hear him adding with a holy contempt: 'For without are the dogs.' ‡

6. Lastly, may God in His mercy save us all from the guilt and ruin of the backslider, and of him who, knowing his Lord's will, did it not, and shall be beaten with many stripes. Hearers of the Gospel, you cannot be too often warned that

* Milton, *Sonnet* xii.

† 2 Tim. 3 : 8; Gal. 5 : 13; 1 Cor. 9 : 21; John 8 : 36.

‡ Eph. 2 : 3; Matt. 7 : 6, (*τῶν χοίρων*;) Phil. 3 : 2; (*τοὺς κύνας*;) Rev. 22 : 15, (*οἱ κυνες.*)—Comp. Horace, *Epist.* I. 2. 26 : 'Vixisset canis immundus, vel amica luto sus.'

there is not one of you but is exposed to even a heavier woe than that of Chorazin and Bethsaida. 'For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace'?*

* Luke 12 : 47; 10 : 13; Heb. 10 : 26–29.

Lecture XIII.

2 *PETER* 3 : 1–4.

'THIS second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour: knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.'

THAT God had made Jesus, the crucified, 'both Lord and Christ,' was the one great truth to be learned from the miracle of Pentecost, as that miracle was expounded by Peter to the wondering multitude.* And in the first chapter of this Epistle (v. 16) he gives us to understand that to proclaim 'the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ' might be said to constitute the burden of apostolic preaching. That He who was dead now sits exalted at the right hand of God; that He has there received, and is now Himself the Dispenser of, the fulness of the Holy Ghost; and that from thence He will yet come again in the glory of His kingdom to judge the quick and the dead, and to make all things new; what but this is the 'most holy faith' † on which the Church rests, and the denial of which is at once the root and the offspring of all heresy? To establish his brethren, therefore, in this ever present and fundamental truth was now the aim of the aged Apostle's ministry both by word and letter; and he was the more earnest and diligent therein, as foreseeing the assaults that were to be made on these very doctrines, (ch. 1 : 12–15.)

* Acts 2 : 36. † Jude 20.

The denial of Christ as Lord and Redeemer—of His work of atonement in our nature under the curse, and of His present supremacy as the Anointed High-Priest within the veil—was even then about to open the floodgate of sin within the Church itself; and the second chapter is wholly taken up with the description and denunciation of these abominable deceivers. The third chapter deals with a more subtle but not less fatal form of antichristian error, when the ungodly and the sinner should take the seat of the scornful, and direct their profane wit against the Church's blessed hope of her Lord's return and of the restitution of all things.* The statement and refutation of this error mainly occupy the first half of the chapter; and then the truth assailed is reasserted, its proper bearing on the life of believers is unfolded, the seeming delay in the fulfilment of the promise is accounted for, and the authority of Paul is cited in confirmation of these things. The writer adds a renewed warning against apostasy, and an exhortation to growth in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and closes with a doxology.

'*This now second epistle, beloved, write I unto you;*' † that the First Epistle of Peter, to which the present writer quite naturally alludes, in passing, as his own,‡ should so soon have been followed by a second from the same hand, was an evidence of his affectionate solicitude, as well as of the importance and urgency of the subject matter. What that was, he immediately explains: '*in both which I stir up your pure mind* § *by way of remembrance, that ye may be mindful of the words spoken before* ‖ *by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the Apostles of the Lord and Saviour.*'

Here again, as in the first chapter, (vv. 16–19,) the appeal

* Ps. 1 : 1; Tit. 2 : 13; Acts 3 : 21.

† Ταύτην ἤδη, ἀγαπητοί, δευτέραν ὑμῖν γράφω ἐπιστολήν—ἤδη belonging to δευτέραν.

‡ 'He should have done so at the outset,' says De Wette; as if any thing like a deliberate, formal claim of authorship would have been less suspicious than this quiet, incidental reference.

§ διάνοιαν. See our English version at 1 Pet. 1 : 13, and elsewhere.

‖ τῶν προειρημένων ῥημάτων.

is to the twofold, concurrent testimony of prophets and apostles—prophets anticipating in their predictions the authoritative message of apostles, and apostles confirming by their message the predictions of prophets. For Peter's phrase intimates clearly enough that '*the commandment* of *us the Apostles*' is rather the commandment conveyed by the Apostles from the Lord and Saviour, as if we should say, according to the better reading of the clause, *your Apostles' commandment of the Lord and Saviour.**

'*Your Apostles*'—possibly with a special reference to Paul and his associates, as those who had first preached the Gospel in Asia Minor.† The expression, however, is one which any Apostle might have used, and without any such limitation. The Apostles belonged all of them to the whole Church, and they all preached the same Gospel.

That Gospel, as we had occasion to observe in the last lecture,‡ may properly be called a '*commandment*' as coming to men from Him who is '*the Lord and Saviour*,' sanctioned by His authority, and claiming in His name instant and absolute faith and obedience.§

Now, those to whom this Epistle was addressed had received in faith '*the words spoken before by the holy Prophets*,' and they had 'purified their souls in obeying the truth' as

* *τῆς τῶν ἀποστόλων ὑμῶν ἐντολῆς, τοῦ Κυρίου καὶ Σωτῆρος—τῶν ἀπ.* and *τοῦ Κυρ. κ.Σ.* forming a double genitive depending on *ἐντολῆς*, and *ὑμῶν* depending on *ἀπ.* —The reading *ὑμῶν* is sustained, says Huther, by 'almost all the authorities,' (Sin. A, B, C, G, J, Vulgate, etc.,) and is edited by Matthiæ, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Wordsworth, Alford. De Wette, however, holds to the *Recepta*, *ἡμῶν*, which he construes, not in apposition with *ἀποστ.* (comp. Acts 10 : 41 ; 13: 33 ; 1 Cor. 1 : 18,) but as governed by it, *our Apostles*. Of course, this affords him another opportunity of speaking of the writer as again betrayed by Jude (vv. 17, 18) into a momentary forgetfulness of the part he had undertaken to play, as one of the Apostles himself! Comp. p. 460, note *. How often have we occasion to repeat Dietlein's remark: "The procedure of our learned theological criticism in regard to Holy Writ is here of such a kind, that any jurist would reckon himself disgraced, were he in the most trifling law-matter to go to work in the same style.'

† See 1 Pet. 1 : 12, p. 52.

‡ See p. 478.

§ It is therefore unnecessary and, I think, erroneous to restrict the word so as to denote either a commandment to beware of the false teachers, (De Wette,) or a commandment to be prepared for the Lord's second coming, (Benson, Huther, Wiesinger, etc.)

announced to them in 'their *Apostles' commandment of the Lord and Saviour.*' They were thus 'built,' as Paul likewise wrote to some of their number, 'on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone.' And what Peter labors from first to last to impress upon them is, that that foundation was not to be improved by any professors of 'science falsely so called'—pretenders to a higher knowledge or new revelations—that should appear among them. Peter himself had nothing of the sort—no new gospel, nor even any modification of the old gospel, to offer for their acceptance. He sought merely to establish them where they already stood *—to '*stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance; that they should be mindful of*' what they had learned, and so make it available for their defence against seducers, as well as for every other necessity of the Christian life. As it would be their sufficient safeguard against the falsehoods and immoralities which had just been exposed in the second chapter, so likewise against another perilous snare, to the consideration of which he now summons their most earnest attention.

'*Knowing this first*'—the same formula that we met with at ch. 1 : 20; in both places it introduces what the writer deemed of the utmost importance to be understood and remembered—'*that there shall come in the last days*'—a common scriptural designation of the days of Messiah, or of this present economy †—'*scoffers*,' or *mockers*, as the same word ‡ is rendered in the only other place where it occurs, namely, the corresponding passage in Jude, (17, 18:) 'But ye, beloved, be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the Apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how they told you that in the last time there shall be mockers, walking according to their own lusts of ungodliness.' There is, moreover, in our text as now universally read, a peculiar emphasis of this kind: 'There

* 1 Pet. 1 : 22; Eph. 2 : 20; 1 Tim. 6 : 20; (*τῆς ψευδωνύμου γνώσεως, the falsely named gnosis;*) 1 Pet. 1 : 12, 25; 5 : 12; 2 Pet. 1 : 3, 4, 12 sqq.; 3 : 17.

† Comp. Is. 2 : 2; Jer. 23 : 20; Acts 2 : 17; Heb. 1 : 2, etc.

‡ *ἐμπαῖκται.* For *ἐμπαιγμῶν*, Heb. 11 : 36, our common version has *mockings*, and the verb *ἐμπαίζω* it invariably (thirteen times) renders *to mock.*

shall come in the last days *mockers in mockery*,'* living in mockery as, so to speak, the element of their being—wholly possessed by a spirit of frivolous, scornful disregard of sacred things, and uttering in regard to them mere raillery and banter. The old doctrine, in particular, of the Lord's return to judgment, should be with them a very favorite topic for the exercise of their powers of contemptuous ridicule. They are described as '*walking according to* † *their own lusts*' ‡—having no other rule of conduct, no other aim in life, than the indulgence of their corrupt inclinations—'*and saying: Where is the promise of His coming? For, since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue thus*' §—that is, just as they are—'*from the beginning of the creation.*'

It will be observed that they do not condescend to name Him of whose coming they speak. Or perhaps this is one of the points in which they derisively mimic the style of Christian love. In the writings of John, for instance, the Saviour is frequently thus referred to; as when the believer's duty is declared, 'so to walk even as He walked;' or we are reminded of the great illustration and exemplar of love, in that 'He laid down His life for us.' Says Bengel: 'The name is readily supplied by the believing heart, full of the memory of the Lord.' ‖ Now there seems to be something like a malignant echo of this tone in the taunt of the mockers: '*Where is the promise of His coming?*'

And indeed the same spirit shows itself in their speaking of the Lord's coming at all as a matter of '*promise.*' To the bereaved Church it was truly so, and often, as she sat expectant in her loneliness and tears, she was heard repeating to herself the gracious assurance which she had again and again received first of all from the lips of her Lord Himself, and

* ἐν ἐμπαιγμονῇ (nowhere else) ἐμπαῖκται—the reading of Sin. A, B, C, the Syriac and Arabic versions, etc.

† κατά—as in vv. 13, 15.

‡ For αὐτῶν ἐπιθυμίας. Griesbach, Scholz, Lachmann read ἐπιθ. αὐτῶν. Alford cancels αὐτῶν.—Jude (16) gives this clause twice in nearly the same words.

§ οὕτω.

‖ 'Nomen facile supplent credentes, plenum pectus habentes memoria Domini.' Comp. 1 John 2 : 6; 3 : 3, 5, 7, 16; 4 : 17; 3 John 7, (Acts 5 : 41 : τοῦ ὀνόματος, *the name.*)

which, renewed to her in the very hour of His departure by the bright angels of the ascension, was long kept fresh in her remembrance by the witness of the Comforter, and the ministry of Apostles, and her own loving desire. Nor is this habitual looking for Christ an exercise of faith and hope peculiar to the early Christians. On the contrary, there is not one of all the exceeding great and precious promises still awaiting fulfilment, that is, or ought ever to be, so dear to the children of God, as that their Lord will come again. 'The appearance of the glory of their great God and Saviour Jesus Christ' is their 'blessed hope.'*

But just as certainly it is not so to the wicked or the false professor or the apostate. For them the great day of the Lord is the most terrible of all possibilities—'a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness;' and well do they know in their secret consciousness that, if a reality, it can be to them nothing else but that. And so by following hard after their own lusts, and by the many arts of self-delusion in which the heart of the sinner soon attains a fatal skill, they strive to quench their forebodings, and oftentimes succeed in doing so, until at last they either settle down into a state of stolid indifference, saying, 'The Lord will not do good, neither will He do evil,'† or the threatened vengeance even becomes the theme of mirthful jest, and again imitating the language, and thus the more bitterly scoffing at the devout anticipations, of their pious neighbors, they ask, '*Where is the promise of His coming?*' What has become of it? There are no signs whatever of its fulfilment. Has the promise, then, been withdrawn? Or was it not rather from the very first a careless sham, or a cruel fraud?

Just so the ungodly in ancient Israel were accustomed to flout the warnings and denunciations of their prophets: 'Let Him make speed, and hasten His work, that we may see it: and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and

* Tit. 2 : 13, (ἐπιφάνειαν τῆς δόξης τοῦ μεγάλου Θεοῦ καὶ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰ. Χ.)
† Zeph. 1 : 12, 14, 15.

come, that we may know it. . . . Where is the God of judgment?'*

There is, however, apparently a slight difference between the two cases. The mockers of the New Testament times were to assume, you will observe, a philosophical air, and proceed on what they claimed to be strictly logical principles. They are prepared to argue the matter: '*For, since the fathers*' —the grey-haired fathers of the human race,† or the Jewish patriarchs,‡ or rather generally those to whom the promise came and who leaned thereon,§ especially perhaps the first generation of the Christian Church‖—'*since the fathers fell asleep*'—still another instance, I suppose, of ironical accommodation to the dialect of faith and of the hope of the resurrection—'*all things continue thus from the beginning of the creation*,' if, indeed, there is any such thing, properly speaking, as the beginning of the creation—for that too they probably mean to call in question, or to suggest it as a doubtful matter.

Now, here it is taken for granted that the Second Coming of the Lord, if it ever took place, would introduce some great change in the physical constitution of things. And the utter unlikelihood, to say the least, of any such revolution is inferred from the actual and historical uniformity in the laws and processes of nature, and the consequent stability of the universe —a uniformity and stability, which are represented as having existed unbroken since the world began, if it ever began.

The validity of this argument will come under consideration in our next Lecture. Meanwhile, it should be remarked that it is very much the same sort of argument that has of late years vaunted itself against the word of God. Indeed, the speculative tendency of our times has taken a yet deeper plunge into atheistic folly, by denying not so much the probability as the possibility of all supernatural intervention of every kind. But even this extreme conclusion rests on no other or firmer ground than that assumed by the mockers of our text: '*All things continue thus from the beginning of the creation.*' Only our philosophers go on to prove that all things

* Is. 5 : 19; Mal. 2 : 17. † Brückner. ‡ Estius, Pott, Wiesinger.
§ Bengel, Huther. ‖ Thiersch, De Wette, Fronmüller.

must ever have been just so, and must ever continue to be just so, because they are now, and for some time past have been, just so, and because neither telescope nor microscope nor chemical analysis nor the profoundest metaphysics can find reason to believe that they ever could have been, or ever can be, otherwise. For example, we have never seen a dead body brought to life, nor has it any power of self-motion, nor can we conceive of any combination of physical causes, or arrangement of material circumstances, by which it could be made to breathe again ; therefore no dead body can possibly have been reanimated in the ages that are past, or can be in the ages that are to come ! What child does not see that the spirit of sheer atheism, as I said, prompts such reasoning as this ?

And it is surely a very startling fact, that by nothing is our age more distinguished from all that have preceded it, than by the prevalence of what may well be called this insolence, or this insanity, of science. Nor has there ever been an age, I think, when the promise of Christ's coming to judge the world and reign in righteousness was so distasteful to His Church, both its ministry and its membership. A few years ago, it is true, 'there was a cry made : Behold, the Bridegroom cometh ; go ye out to meet Him,'* and that cry still sounds in Christendom. But of those whom it has aroused from slumber how many have been merely irritated by it, and how many mock ! What if these very days of ours be even in a special sense *the last, the end, of the days*, or rather, *the last days*,† in which the predicted mockers were to appear ! My own belief is that it is even so—that we have arrived very near to the close of the present dispensation, and that the throne of our Lord and Saviour and Judge will speedily be unveiled.

* Matt. 25 : 6.

† Instead of the *Recepta* ἐσχάτου (comp. the better reading of Heb. 1 : 1, and the Sept. Numb. 24 : 14) Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford read ἐσχάτων (Sin. A, B, C.** Comp. Sept. Dan. 10 : 14, and 1 Pet. 1 : 20, p. 79, note †.) The two readings have the same meaning, ἐσχάτων followed by the article being also neuter.

1. The first use, therefore, that I make of this passage is to warn you anew against the sneering infidelity of our times in regard to the Second Advent, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. Take these things away, and, says Calvin, 'there is no longer any Gospel, the strength of Christ is exhausted, religion perishes utterly. In plucking up the faith of Christ's coming, Satan aims directly at the throat of the Church. For to what end did Christ die and rise again, but that along with Himself He might some day redeem us from death, and gather us into life eternal? Piety, therefore, is destroyed to its foundation, unless the faith of the resurrection abides unshaken; and so it is on this side that Satan most fiercely assails us.'*

Grow in the love of Christ, and you will grow in the love of His appearing. You will also be less in danger of being shaken in mind, nay, your hope itself will be confirmed, when you find the Apostle's word fulfilled by the rise and impious confidence of them that mock, and who, 'because they have no changes, therefore fear not God.'† As another‡ wrote more than a century and a half ago: 'These are the dregs of mankind, found in the dregs of time. . . . Such as are in the chair of the scorner are in the highest form in the devil's school.' You will stand in awe of that saying of the wise man, 'Surely God scorneth the scorners,'§ and to their frequent taunt, 'Where is the promise of His coming?' you will deem it sufficient to reply: It is written in the Scriptures of truth, and it lives in the heart of Christ and His people.

Yes, that hope maketh not ashamed. The promise shall not fail. Our Lord will come again to fulfil our joy in Him and His own joy in us, and all things are nearly ready for His coming. Then shall the faith of the fathers be vindicated,

* 'Hæc est periculosa illusio, quum dubitationem injiciunt ultimæ resurrectionis, qua sublata nullum amplius est Evangelium, exinanita est Christi virtus, periit tota religio. Ergo Ecclesiæ jugulum recta petit Satan, dum fidem adventus Christi convellit. Quorsum enim mortuus est Christus et resurrexit, nisi ut secum aliquando nos a morte redemptos in vitam æternam colligat? Funditus itaque diruitur pietas, nisi fixa manet resurrectionis fides: ideo hac parte acrius nos oppugnat Satan.'

† Ps. 55 : 19. ‡ Burkitt. § Prov. 3 : 34.

and they that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, and great shall be the joy of the reunited children of God.

2. It is perfectly obvious, and that too from the whole strain of both Epistles, that the writer of them had not the least thought of any millennium of truth and holiness prior to the fulfilment of that promise. The last days—the days preceding the Lord's return—were to be distinguished by the prevalence rather of ungodliness and mocking unbelief. And to this agree the other Apostles. John, for instance, knew it to be 'the last time' by the swarming antichrists that were abroad already in his day. And that no improvement in this respect was looked for is plain enough from Paul's teaching in one of his earliest Epistles with regard to the destruction of the last great Antichrist by the brightness of the Lord's appearing, as well as from his warning to Timothy in the latest of his Epistles, that evil men and seducers should wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. It is indeed unquestionable that the general tenor of the New Testament is to the same effect.*

3. The promise that Christ will come again is the peculiar treasure, and the spirit of waiting for Him should now be the distinguishing characteristic, of the Church which He purchased with His own blood. So far as that spirit is wanting in our religious experience, just so far is our experience defective, no matter how active and earnest we may be in other directions.

* 1 John 2 : 18; 2 Thess. 2 : 8; 1 Tim. 4 : 1; 2 Tim. 3 : 1, 13.

Lecture XIV.

2 *Peter* 3 : 5–9.

'For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.'

These verses contain the Apostle's reply to the taunt and the argument of the scoffers of the last days. The taunt was directed against the Christian hope of the Lord's Second Coming—a hope resting on His own express and oft-repeated promise; and the argument by which they pretended to justify the taunt was drawn from the fact that, though the fathers to whom the promise first came had long since fallen asleep, there were still no signs of its being fulfilled either to them or their children, but, on the contrary, the natural course of things went on uninterrupted, just as it had done—so they assume—from the beginning of the creation. And you will now observe that it is this assumption that is first disposed of.

'*For of this they are willingly ignorant*'—they talk so only because a well-known fact in the world's history escapes their notice or their recollection—a fact so well known that it must be that they prefer not to notice it, or else they choose to for-

get it*—namely this, '*that, by the word of God, heavens were from of old,*† *and the earth standing out of the water and in the water;*' this translation of the second clause is certainly inexact, but the clause itself, however translated, is a difficult one. We shall at least get something liker the original, if we say: *and earth out of water and by water consisting* or *subsisting*‡—'*whereby the world that then was, being flooded*§ *with water, perished.*' There are several minute questions of construction here,‖ with which you need not be troubled. The main points are sufficiently evident.

It is not so, says Peter, that 'all things continue thus from the beginning of the creation.' There has been at any rate one mighty break in the settled order of nature, and there is therefore nothing ridiculous, or even essentially improbable, in the idea of there yet being a second. These men would seem never to have heard of the flood;** and it is obvious that their objection would have been every whit as plausible—in some respects perhaps even more so—in Noah's days, if then urged, and no doubt it was, against his warning of the coming deluge, as it is now, when urged against the promise of the Lord's coming. Then too there were heavens and an earth—earth with its heavenly surroundings of clouds and atmosphere—and these not of yesterday, but from of old. And then too there were your so-called laws of nature, as steady and seemingly unchangeable as now. Whatever shock or derangement the primeval world had suffered in the hour of

* *λανθάνει γὰρ αὐτοὺς τοῦτο θέλοντας.* Not a few interpreters from Hammond to Huther refer *τοῦτο* to what precedes in v. 4, *they who are of this mind are ignorant.* But the sense is inferior, and such a use of *θέλω* without example in the New Testament. Comp. also v. 8.

† *οὐρανοὶ* (in v. 7, with the article) *ἦσαν ἔκπαλαι,* (comp. ch. 2 : 3, p. 444, note ‖.)

‡ *καὶ γῆ* (in v. 7 with the article) *ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ δι' ὕδατος συνεστῶσα*; (see the English margin, and Col. 1 : 17.—Sin.[1] *διὰ ὕδ. συνεστῶτα.*)

§ *κατακλυσθείς,* (only here.) The noun, *κατακλυσμός* (ch. 2 : 5) is always, in our version, flood.

‖ See the *Revision* of this Epistle, *in loc.*

** Rosenmüller's notion that the text refers to some pre-Adamite catastrophe, though favored by Jacobus, (,) is plainly erroneous. The Bible has nothing to say about any such thing, and, as Peter himself probably knew nothing of it, so the scoffers may well be supposed to be as innocently ignorant.

the first transgression had occurred at least sixteen centuries before. During all that time every thing in the heavens and earth had gone forward as smoothly and regularly as the rising and setting of the sun, or the flowing and ebbing of the tides. What, then, was there to fear? And Noah's contemporaries did not fear, but, while he preached and hammered, they mocked. His strange announcement and its accompanying reproofs soon got likewise to be an old story, and, as he went forth to his daily work of faith, he was, of course, often met with such greetings as, 'Still no deluge? That fine shower yesterday was promising, but did not quite answer the purpose. Few signs of it this bright morning. How long are we to wait for the real thing? Do let us have that grand affair come off, when we are to see water—wherever it is all to come from—learn to run up-hill, and only this huge, grotesque boat of yours will survive the wreck of a world.' Thus they 'rejoiced in their boastings,'* and walked after their own lusts, while Noah unabashed still plied his Divine task.

They too forgot, or were willingly ignorant, that that 'ancient world' (ch. 2 : 5) had not existed from eternity—that the laws of nature had neither created it, nor enacted themselves—and that on the same Almighty Will, which had brought it into being, it must be absolutely and momentarily dependent. '*By the word of God*,' and that unaided and alone —by the calm '*Let it be*' of omnipotence—'God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day. And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called He Seas: and God saw that it was good.'†

In this way,‡ then, and in no other, the heavens and earth

* James 4 : 16. † Gen. 1 : 7–10.

‡ It is quite in accordance with De Wette's treatment of our Epistle, that he

arose—*stood together*,* as Peter's word properly is—'*out of water*,' the waters of the chaotic deep, over which brooded the creative Spirit, being not merely the place of the world's origin, but furnishing also the materials from which it was formed. Nor was that all. Water had, moreover, an important instrumental agency—'*by water*'†—both in moulding and shaping the earth, and in the preparation and adornment of its heavenly canopy. But throughout the whole process it was still '*the word of God*,' that alone was efficient and controlling. And so, when through the wickedness of man it repented God of the work of His own hands, He needed no other means for the world's destruction than the very element out of which and by which it had been constituted and upheld:‡ '*whereby*'—that is, probably, *in consequence of which circumstances*, or *arrangement of things*§—'*the world that then was*, including the heavens and the earth, and that impious generation with all its works,‖ '*being flooded with water, perished*.' Not, indeed, that the material substance of the antediluvian world was then annihilated; but so great was the change in other respects, that what followed may well be spoken of as another world, even as Noah became the second father of mankind.

The whole argumentation, therefore, of the scoffer is based on a falsehood. All things are *not* now as they have been since the beginning of the creation. But, continues Peter,

thinks the writer drew his cosmogony, as well as his subsequent description of the destruction by fire, rather from heathen sources.

* *συνεστῶσα* is perhaps best taken as referring by zeugma both to *γῆ* and *οὐρανος*. So many of the best commentators from Œcumenius to Wiesinger.

† *δι' ὕδατος* is referred by Alford somewhat unintelligibly to the waters above the firmament—by De Wette to both the upper and nether waters, the latter being disposed arbitrarily to restrict this phrase to the firmament, and translating the preposition *through the midst of, between*.

‡ Œcumenius: Ἡ *γῆ ἐξ ὕδατος μὲν, ὡς ἐξ ὑλικοῦ αἰτίου, δι' ὕδατος δὲ ὡς διατελικοῦ. ὕδωρ γὰρ τὸ συνέχον τὴν γῆν, κτλ.*

§ This general reference of *δι' ὧν* (comp. *εἰς τό* of 1 Pet. 2 : 8, p. 119, note *) I prefer to any of the numerous other explanations that have been proposed, (see *Revision.*) Of these the best is that which make *ὕδατος* and *τῷ τοῦ θεοῦ λόγῳ* the antecedents, (Besser, Huther, Brückner, Wiesinger.)

‖ Œcumenius restricts *κόσμος* to the living creatures then on the earth; and so Fronmüller.

through all changes, however violent and however extensive, the word of God remains unchanged. To-day it holds the same sovereign sway over the creatures that it held in the days before the flood. What is there, then, so strange and incredible in the assertion, that a catastrophe, similar and yet different and more appalling, awaits the world with which we have to do? That catastrophe is described first generally in the 7th verse, and then more in detail in the 10th and 12th verses.

'*But the heavens which are now*,* *and the earth, have by the same word*'—or, as some read, *by His word* †—'*been*,' not dismissed from Divine restraint, to go their own way henceforth and for ever, free and independent, or subject only to laws of nature—a phrase which, except as an expression of the all-upholding as well as all-creating word of God's power, ‡ may be said to represent an inconceivable nonentity—no, not thus turned loose in the universe, but '*laid up in store*,' retained in strictest custody, as it were under lock and key, and that for a special ulterior purpose, '*being reserved*,' not for a second deluge of water, but '*for fire unto the day of judgment and*,' as must inevitably be the case, '*destruction of the ungodly men*,' § of such in general, and particularly of these very scoffers, whom, says Bengel, the fire will confute.‖

That the future judgment, of which that on Sodom and Gomorrah was an eminent type, shall be by fire, is a very frequent intimation of the Scriptures of both Testaments. 'Our God shall come,' sang the Psalmist; 'a fire shall devour before Him.' And again: 'A fire goeth before Him, and burneth up His enemies round about.' 'Behold,' exclaims

* *οἱ δὲ νῦν οὐρανοὶ καὶ ἡ γῆ*. Grammatically *νῦν* belongs only to *οὐρ.*, though in sense also to *γῆ*.

† For the *Recepta*, *τῷ αὐτῷ λόγῳ*, (A Vulgate, Lachmann,) Griesbach, Scholz, Tischendorf, Alford read *τῷ αὐτοῦ λόγῳ*, (Sin. B, C, G, J, Syriac.)

‡ Heb. 1 : 3.

§ *τεθησαυρισμένοι εἰσὶ*, (the accomplished, permanent act,) *πυρὶ τηρούμενοι* (the present design of God in that act) *εἰς ἡμέραν κρίσεως καὶ ἀπωλείας* (as in ch. 2 : 1) *τῶν ἀσεβῶν ἀνθρώπων*. Knapp, Meyer, Lachmann, Hahn, Theile, Wiesinger connect *πυρί* with *τεθησ.*,=*stored for fire*. Peile also prefers this connection, but is not sustained by usage in his translation of the phrase, *stored with fire*.

‖ 'Ignis confutabit empæctas.'

Isaiah at the close of his prophecies, 'the Lord will come with fire, and with His chariots like a whirlwind, to render His anger with fury, and His rebukes with flames of fire. For by fire and by His sword will the Lord plead with all flesh.' And so in the vision of Daniel: 'A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him. . . . I beheld, even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame.' Not less explicit is the New Testament in regard to that day being 'revealed by fire.' Paul, for instance, used no rhetorical figure of speech, when he wrote to the Thessalonians of 'the revelation' of the Lord Jesus from heaven, 'in fire of flame;' and just as little reason is there for so explaining away the solemn statements of our present chapter.* Science itself testifies, that there is no lack of means already prepared, and adequate to the accomplishment of such a catastrophe. Nor is it unworthy of mention, as a sort of traditional corroboration, that the idea of the world's ultimate destruction by fire, as well as the ideas of its having had its origin in water, and of a former deluge, have prevailed very widely in the poetry, philosophy, and popular notions of the heathen.

Having thus set aside the argument, drawn from the assumed stability of the natural order, against the second coming of the Lord, the Apostle next takes up the question of its apparent delay. The promise itself had often been given in terms that implied its speedy fulfilment, and the apostolic churches, accordingly, were taught to live in continual expectation. But as time wore on, and the Lord did not appear, and the slumber of the grave was still unbroken, there was danger that the faith of some might fail, and the hearts of all be discouraged. The writer, therefore, deals with this difficulty in the way of a direct address to his brethren, and in a spirit of great tenderness.

'*But of this one thing be ye, beloved, not ignorant*'—literally, *But let not this one thing escape you, beloved*†—'*that one day is*

* Ps. 50 : 3; 97 : 3; Is. 66 : 15, 16, 24; Dan. 7 : 9, 10; 1 Cor. 3 : 13; 2 Thess. 1 : 8, (*Lectures*, p. 437, sqq.)

† Ἓν δὲ τοῦτο μὴ λανθανέτω ὑμᾶς, (in emphatic opposition to v. 5,) ἀγαπητοί.

with the Lord' (in the Old Testament sense, as equivalent to *God*) '*as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*' Differences so minute are not measured on God's dial. The thought is borrowed from Psalm 90 : 4, 'For a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past;' and this is merely strengthened by giving also the converse. The immense difference in the Divine estimate of time from ours is, then, the first consideration by which the Apostle seeks to break the force of the temptation.

And another is derived from the Lord's gracious purpose in what might seem to our short-sighted impatience to be an unaccountable postponement: '*The Lord*' (not the *Lord Jesus*, nor yet, as some explain, *God the Father*, but, as in the previous verse, *God* without regard to the personal distinction) '*is not slack*,' or *tardy*, '*concerning the promise*'—that great promise with which these mockers make merry—'*as some*,'* some perhaps even among yourselves, '*account slackness*,' or '*tardiness*.'† They apply their own poor human measures to the Divine procedure, and no wonder that they begin to find it slow, and possibly even to suspect that the Lord has forgotten His word, or has become indifferent to the hopes which it created.

Thus in their hasty surmisings they miss the true explanation of the whole matter. '*The Lord is not tardy concerning the promise*'—He is neither oblivious nor unconcerned, nor so much as an hour behindhand in the execution of His original plan—'*but is long-suffering toward us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*' Here some read *toward you;* others, *on your account*, or *for your sakes*.‡ But these variations can scarcely be said to affect the great truth taught in these delightful words. That truth, however, may be taken in one or other of two ways, both

* Including Alford and Fronmüller.

† *οὐ βραδύνει* (occurs again in 1 Tim. 3 : 15. Comp. Wisd. of Sir. 32 : 18) *δ* (cancelled by Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford, etc., after Sin., etc.) *Κύριος τῆς ἐπαγγελίας ὥς τινες βραδυτῆτα* (in the New Testament only here) *ἡγοῦνται*.—Erasmus made *τῆς ἐπαγγ.* dependent on *Κύριος*, and this construction has been adopted by several.

‡ *εἰς ὑμᾶς*, (Tischendorf, Alford;) *δι' ὑμᾶς*, (Lachmann, after Sin. A; Vulgate: *propter vos.*) *ὑμᾶς* is supported also by B, C; and comp. 1 Pet. 1 : 20.

equally in accordance with the apostolic spirit, and with the general analogy of Scripture.

In speaking of the Lord's '*long-suffering toward us*,' the writer may have wished to be understood as speaking of '*us*' as Christians, or as men.

In the former case his meaning would be this: 'The design of God in the present dispensation being to take out of all nations a people for His name, the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb, the dispensation must last till that design be fully accomplished. All that the Father giveth to the Son shall come to Him; and therefore must the opportunity of repentance be allowed them. But, when the last of these elect ones shall have been gathered, and made ready for the coming of Christ, that coming will be delayed no longer. Thus, in the time of Noah, the day on which 'all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened,' was 'the self-same day' on which Noah with his family went into the ark; a coincidence specially noted by our Lord: 'They were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, *until the day* that Noah entered into the ark.' And just so, in the case of the cities of the plain, the Lord, we read, 'could not do any thing' till Lot entered into Zoar. And '*then*,' it is added, the fiery tempest descended.* Now in like manner it is a perfectly legitimate interpretation to say, that, as the Apostle wrote these words, '*The Lord is long-suffering toward us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance*,' he was thinking of that Body of Christ which must be completed before it can be glorified with its Head; and I have sometimes inclined to believe that that is what he really meant.

But, as was said before, the more general reference is no less allowable, and then the text affords a New Testament counterpart to those words in Ezekiel (18 : 23; 33 : 11): 'Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? and not that he should return from his ways, and live? . . . As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the

* Acts 15 : 14; Rev. 14 : 4; John 6 : 37; Gen. 7 : 11, 13; Matt. 24 : 38; 19 : 22–24.

wicked ; but that the wicked turn from his way and live.' Or the writer may have had in his eye 1 Timothy 2 : 3, 4, where Paul declares that 'God our Saviour will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.'

Of course, these and many other such passages that might be quoted have nothing whatever to do with the efficient will —the irresistible decree—of Him who is Almighty ; and the proof of this lies in the fact that the vast majority of the wicked do not turn from their evil ways, do not come to repentance and the knowledge of the truth, are not saved. In what sense, then, is the opposite the will of God? In the same sense in which the ten commandments are the will of God. They proclaim what is agreeable to the holiness and benevolence of His nature, and what is therefore 'good and acceptable in His sight.'* But as this will of God does by no means secure the moral perfection of all men, so as little does it secure their universal salvation. And the explanation is the same in both cases ; not the weakness of God, nor the insincerity of His word, but the frailty and ungodliness of the sinner.

1. Learn, then, from these verses, in the first place, the necessity of repentance—of a thorough, gracious change in men's natural way of thinking and feeling in regard to God and themselves and their own highest interests—if they would escape the impending ruin.

2. In the second place, beware of being lulled into security by the riches of God's present 'goodness and forbearance and long-suffering.' Know that this 'goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance,' and that, if the merciful purpose be despised and thwarted, the end can only be an accumulated treasure of wrath in 'the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.' A more terrible doom even now awaits the impenitent than that which overtook the men of Noah's days, 'which were cut down out of time, whose foundation was overflown with a flood : which said unto God, Depart from us ; and what can the Almighty do to them?'

* 1 Tim 2 : 3.

Oh! that the instant and repeated warning, that came from the lips of the compassionate Son of God, our Saviour, were heeded by all who hear it: 'Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.' Surely if any of us are ignorant of these things, it is because we at least are 'wilfully ignorant.'*

3. In the third place, shun the snare of the scoffers, and think not that, because the sun continues to rise on the evil and on the good, and the rain to descend on the just and on the unjust,† therefore the threatenings any more than the promises of God shall remain for ever in abeyance. 'We now see,' says Calvin on this passage, 'how greatly they err who stop at the bare elements of matter, as if in them perpetuity inhered, and they were not rather by their very nature subject to the will of God. In these few words there is an ample refutation of the insolence of those who, to attack God, arm themselves with physical considerations. . . . Very many such we see nowadays, who, having got a slight smattering of the rudiments of philosophy, by way of passing themselves off as great philosophers, go hunting merely after profane speculations.'‡ What a picture of very many also in our own times!

4. Finally, let those of us who 'are Christ's' hold fast, not only in our creed, but in the habitual exercises of our faith and hope, the promise of our Lord's return. 'For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.' Or, as the assurance is renewed to us in the New Testament: 'Yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry.'

'Surely I come quickly. Amen; come, Lord Jesus.'§

* Rom. 2 : 4, 5; Job 22 : 16, 17; Luke 13 : 3, 5.

† Matt. 5 : 45.

‡ 'Nunc videmus quantopere errent qui subsistunt in nudis elementis, quasi in ipsis sita esset perpetuitas, ac non potius ad Dei nutum flexibilis esset eorum natura. His paucis verbis abunde refutatur eorum petulantia qui ad Deum oppugnandum physicis rationibus se armant. . . . Quales hodie videmus permultos, qui leviter aspersi philosophiæ rudimentis, quo se pro magnis philosophis venditent, tantum profanas speculationes venantur.'

§ 1 Cor. 15 : 23; Hab. 2 : 3; Heb. 10 : 37; Rev. 22 : 20.

Lecture XV.

2 *PETER* 3 : 10–13.

'But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.'

To the preceding confutation of those, who at the end of the days should be found deriding the ancient hope of the Church respecting the Lord's return in 'power and great glory,'* the Apostle now adds his own positive testimony to the certainty, the manner, and the consequences, of the coming of that day of the Lord which the event in question should introduce, and he at the same time points out the practical bearing of this truth on the life of Christians.

I. First, *the certainty*: '*But*'—notwithstanding the taunts of these ignorant and contemptuous gainsayers, and however protracted may be the interval, (vv. 3–8)—'*the*† *day of the Lord will come.*' Or the connection may rather be with v. 9: '*But*'—let none presume on the delay vouchsafed to men by the Divine long-suffering, as if it were going to last for ever—'*the day of the Lord will come.*'

This '*day of the Lord*,'‡ or '*day of God*,' (v. 12,) is none

* Matt. 24 : 30. † Lachmann and Tischendorf omit ἡ, after B, C.

‡ So 2 Thess. 2 : 2, (according to the better reading.) Comp. Joel 1 : 15; 2 : 1; Is. 2 : 12; 13 : 6, 9.

other than the 'day in the which God will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained,' and is therefore also known in Scripture as 'the day of the Lord Jesus'—the day of God in Christ.*

At present Satan, as the god of this world, has his day, and man has his, the Supreme Being meanwhile having seemingly withdrawn from the supervision and control of human affairs. At least, His enemies bear themselves as if He really had done so. But in 'the day of the Lord' the Lord alone shall be exalted. The Lord God Almighty will take to Him His great power and reign. The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together. At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. And when this day reaches its noontide, in what our Apostle calls 'the day of eternity,' then too shall the creation attain to the zenith of faith's brightest anticipations, and God shall be all in all.†

For it can scarcely be necessary to caution you against the absurdity of taking '*the day of the Lord*' to be a day of twelve hours, or of twenty-four hours. It is, on the contrary, the most glorious and lasting of all the Divine economies—a day which shall have no night, and will be followed by no to-morrow. Its dawn is at the appearing of Christ the second time without sin unto salvation, and its forenoon hours extend through the long ages of the apocalyptic millennium and mediatorial reign, whose termination is signalized by the instantaneous suppression of the last desperate outbreak of evil, the second resurrection, and the closing acts of judgment.‡

Now, says Peter, '*the day of the Lord*'—a phrase first used by Joel (1 : 15 ; 2 : 1 ; 3 : 14) eight centuries before—so long promised, so long expected, and, as you thought, so oft deferred, '*will come*,' *will arrive* § at last ; nor will the indif-

* Acts 17 : 31 ; 2 Cor. 1 : 14. See p. 499.

† 2 Cor. 4 : 4 ; Luke 22 : 53 ; Rev. 12 : 12 ; 1 Cor. 4 : 3, (see the Greek ;) Is. 2 : 11 ; 40 : 5 ; Rev. 11 : 17 ; Phil. 2 : 10 11 ; 1 Cor. 15 : 28 ; 2 Pet. 3 : 18, (*ἡμέραν αἰῶνος*.)

‡ Heb. 9 : 28 ; Rev. 20 : 4, 8–15.

§ *ἥξει*.

ference of the world, or the slumbers of the Church, or the jeers of scoffers, hinder its coming. Whatever else in the future is uncertain, this is sure and inevitable. And what is there in our poor speculations about the future, or in the deepest and most far-reaching schemes of statesmen, or in the glowing visions of patriotism, that will bear comparison with this? All these may again, as they so often have in times past, disappoint the confident hopes of men; and still it remains firm as the decree, true as the oath of God, that '*the day of the Lord will come.*'

II. And how will it come? That was our second point: the *manner* of the coming or arrival of the day of the Lord. It will come, says our text, '*as a thief in the night,*' or simply '*as a thief;*' the words, *in the night,** being wanting in the best manuscripts, and probably introduced into others from 1 Thess. 5 : 2.

This figure of the thief is the one that oftenest occurs in the scriptural illustration of this solemn theme.† And the ideas most readily suggested by it are unexpectedness, surprise, hostility, loss. But it is evident that to the faithful, longing children of God the great crisis will wear no such aspect. 'Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.' To them it will come as the day of their redemption—'as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth'—no dread, unforeseen catastrophe, but the joyous fulfilling of the desires and prayers of the weary night-watchers.‡ And it is also true that in the heavens and on the earth and sea there will be signs of the coming doom, numerous enough and portentous enough, it might be supposed, to arrest the attention of all. But even these will be overlooked or misinterpreted by a giddy, reckless, self-confident generation. 'The wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand.'§ And so the great day *will arrive*—will have

* Almost all the critical editors cancel *ἐν νυκτί*, after Sin. A, B, Vulgate, etc.

† Matt. 24 : 42–44; Mark 13 : 34, 35; Luke 12 : 39; 1 Thess. 5 : 2–4; Rev. 3 : 3; 16 : 15.

‡ Luke 21 : 28; 2 Sam. 23 : 4. Comp. Ps. 30 : 5; 130 : 6; Acts 27 : 29.

§ Dan. 12 : 10.

set in—will be actually upon men—ere ever they are aware of its presence; and its first acts of judgment, in the resurrection of the holy dead, and the change of the living saints, and the simultaneous ascent of the gathered multitude into the descending cloud of Christ's glory, may all pass without creating so much as an eddy or a ripple in the rushing streams of ungodliness. But very soon these streams will have a sudden arrest laid on them. The lightning of God will flash on the tottering pillars of the world, startling sinners from their vain dreams, only to know that their house has been broken into, and to realize the greatness and remedilessness of their loss. And then will the cry of their horror and despair mingle with the roar of the passing heavens and the kindled earth.*

III. For consider, in the third place, *the consequences* of the coming of the day of the Lord.

Some of these consequences have already been mentioned incidentally, to which, as well as to others clearly enough indicated elsewhere, there is no reference whatever in the passage before us. For example, it is, I think, demonstrable that among the many glories that go to make up the brightness of the future age subsequent to the Lord's second advent, is the glory of the restored Israel and of 'Jerusalem, the city of the Great King.'† But Peter here says not a word about that, any more than about the resurrection of the dead. Having still in mind the argument of the scoffers from the asserted durability of the present cosmical arrangements, he mainly limits his view to the change that is to pass over the material creation, when it too 'shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.'‡

Another point of no less importance, and the failure to observe which has, perhaps more than any thing else, given rise to endless mistakes and difficulties, is this, that, in describing the transformation of the present into the future world, the writer does not allow himself to dwell on the steps of the pro-

* Comp. *Lect. on Thess.* p. 274, sqq. † Matt. 5 : 35. ‡ Rom. 8 : 21.

cess—the stages, so to speak, of the transition—but takes in the whole work at one glance, and as consummated in the one day of the Lord. This, indeed, is well known to be the prophetic style, as when the Old Testament throughout depicts the times of Messiah in such a way as to leave scarcely visible the interval between His first and second comings—between the cross and the throne. Nor does the specification of the six days' work of creation in the first chapter of Genesis hinder even the inspired historian from immediately summing up the whole at the beginning of the second chapter thus: 'These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, *in the day* that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens.' Only let there be due allowance for the operation of this same principle of interpretation, as we read the statements of Scripture respecting things to come, and we shall avoid very many occasions of stumbling.

After all, however, it were utterly foolish and presumptuous in us to insist on having these various statements of the numberless details of this wonderful work of God so clearly explained to our weakness and ignorance, and so nicely sorted and adjusted in their mutual relation, as to leave nothing to perplex our apprehension of the infinite theme. And the folly and presumption will be no less great, if we think to get rid of our perplexities by either ignoring or wresting any plain declaration of the sacred word. Let us do our best, and there will still remain difficulties for us in connection with this and every other Divine operation—difficulties which the day itself must solve. As it is only 'through faith' that 'we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God,'* so it would be strange indeed, if, in contemplating through the glass of prophecy the emergence of the new creation from the ruin that sin has wrought, there were found no room for the exercise of the same gracious spirit.

Taking with us, therefore, these few preliminary cautions, let us briefly review the announcements of our text.

* Heb. 11 : 3.

'*The heavens shall pass away with a great*,' or *rushing*,* 'noise;' certainly not the heaven in which God and the angels dwell. Nor is it necessary to include in the meaning of the word even the starry heavens. Throughout this whole context (vs. 5, 7, 12, 13) it seems evidently to denote merely the heavens belonging immediately to our earth—the firmament of Genesis 1 : 6–8—the atmosphere—the domain of the clouds, and birds, and, as Scripture intimates more than once,† of the evil spirits. Having shared in the defilement of sin, '*the heavens*' also shall undergo the purification of fire. 'They shall be changed'‡—'*shall pass away with a rushing noise*,' as of whirlwinds, or, some would say, as of a house falling into ruins,§ and that amidst crackling flames.‖—In v. 12 it is said that *by reason of* the day of God, or *in consequence of* its coming,** '*the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved*'—loosened, as it were, from their present attachments and sent adrift, or dissolved internally, like any other fuel of fire. But let us not think of introducing into this description, as has sometimes been done,†† the ideas and conclusions of our modern chemical analysis, by way of helping us to account for either the sights or the sounds of this appalling scene. The Apostle is not at all concerned about the scientific exactness or possibilities, but, in aiming at a religious impression on the hearts of his readers, uses popular language to describe phenomena, as they shall hereafter impress themselves on the senses of men. Accordingly, the same word, that is used of the heavens in v. 12, is in the next clause of v. 10 used of the elements:

'*But the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat;*' whereas in v. 12 again the corresponding clause reads, '*And the elements melt with fervent heat.*'‡‡ Nor can I think it worth while

* ῥοιζηδόν—in the New Testament only here.—Sin. ἐν ᾗ οὐρανοὶ μὲν ῥυζηδόν.

† Eph. 2 : 2; 6 : 12. Comp. Luke 10 : 18.

‡ Ps. 102 : 26; Heb. 1 : 12. § De Wette. ‖ Huther.

** δι' ἣν—which many refer to παρουσίαν. †† See Clarke's Commentary.

‡‡ V. 10: στοιχεῖα δὲ καυσούμενα (only here and v. 12) λυθήσονται (Lachmann: λυθήσεται, Sin. B, C)—v. 12: καὶ στοιχεῖα καυσούμενα τήκεται, (only here. Lachmann follows the reading τακήσεται of C and the Vulgate. Comp. the Sept. Is. 34 : 4 and Mic. 1 : 4.)

to refine as to the precise import in either place. In v. 10 some connect the clause especially with what precedes respecting the heavens,* others with what follows respecting the earth ;† and the word *elements* has been variously referred to the sun, moon, and stars ‡—an idea altogether foreign to the scope of the passage—to the four elements of the ancient philosophy, fire, air, earth, water §—to two or three of the number ‖—and even to the constituent parts of water alone.** But all such strictness of definition is probably beside the mark. The clause is best taken generally, as including whatever comes under the power of this great conflagration ; and the elements will be, according to the popular sense of the term both in Greek and English, the smaller parts that go to make up the whole.

It is then added by way of climax, as that which comes most nearly home to our human feelings, '*and the earth and the works therein*' ††—whether of nature or of art ‡‡—'*shall be burned up.*' §§ The clause is so framed as to suggest at once the universality and the particularity of the judgment—its minutely searching as well as its far-reaching operation. In the language of Isaiah (2 : 12–17) : 'The day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up ; and he shall be brought low : and upon all the cedars of Lebanon, that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan, and upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are lifted up, and upon every high tower, and upon every fenced wall, and upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all pleasant pictures. And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low ; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.'

* Huther, Besser. † Fronmüller.
‡ Bengel, Dietlein, (but not exclusively.) § Bede.
‖ Horneius : air, earth, water ; Estius, Calov : air, water.
** Clarke : hydrogen and oxygen !
†† *τὰ ἐν αὐτῇ ἔργα.*
‡‡ Bengel : 'naturæ et artis.'
§§ *κατακαήσεται* ; for which Sin. and B, and some cursive MSS. give the unintelligible reading, *εὑρεθήσεται* ; C, *ἀφανισθήσεται.*

Such, then, are some of the terrible results of the coming of the day of God.

And now you may well ask, in reference even to this fair visible frame-work of creation: But is that all? And is this indeed, in the words of the dying statesman,* 'the last of earth'?—of that earth which God made in the beginning 'very good'—from which in every age have ascended to His throne the prayers and thanksgivings of believing souls—the birthplace and the grave of His own Incarnate Son? Is it, after all—yea, though it has been baptized with the Saviour's most precious blood—to be reduced to perpetual ashes, or an everlasting chaos, if not perchance put out of existence altogether? And will not such an issue be the triumph of Satan the Destroyer, rather than of Christ the Redeemer?

It cannot be denied that just such wild notions as these have long been floating, for want of better, in the common mind of Christendom, and that in some quarters the Church is still taught to anticipate, as a matter of praise, the time when 'the universe shall burn, and God shall destroy His own works,' instead of those of the devil.† But for the too general prevalence of this woful chimera Shakespeare, as I have elsewhere remarked,‡ may be largely responsible, not Scripture:

> 'And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
> The cloud-capt towers, the gorgeous palaces,
> The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
> Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
> And, like the insubstantial pageant faded,
> Leave not a rack behind.'

That, no doubt, is fine poetry, but it is neither good philosophy nor Bible doctrine. The idea of the future annihilation, or eternal desolation, of this world of ours, has absolutely nothing to sustain it in the analogies of nature, the deductions of science, or the teachings of Scripture.

* John Quincy Adams.

† Comp. the otherwise excellent hymn, 'Daughter of Zion, from the dust,' etc., with 1 John 3 : 8.

‡ *Perpetuity of the Earth*, p. 191. To this little volume the reader is referred for a fuller statement of the scriptural argument.

What! some one of course will say, does not your text expressly assert that the heavens shall pass away, and the earth be burned up? Yes, I answer, and it likewise asserts expressly: '*Nevertheless we*'—or simply, *But**—'*according to His promise, we*'—we Christians—'*look for new heavens and a new earth,*† *wherein righteousness dwelleth;*' *dwelleth* being the last word, and emphatic: *dwelleth,* as in her own secure and eternal home.

Now there surely can be no good reason for supposing that God will make this new creation out of nothing, when here are the materials of the old creation ready to His hands. Or if you still ask me to reconcile this passing away of the old into the new with the Apostle's strong word, *shall be burned up,* I think it sufficient to point you back to the 6th and 7th verses, which declare that the ancient world, the original heavens and earth, '*perished,*' *was destroyed*—quite as strong a word—in the deluge, and then reappeared in its existing form, as 'the heavens and the earth which are now;' the days of Noah thus furnishing the most signal example and type, not only of the judgment, but also of the salvation, of God.

We have, however, says Peter, for the foundation of our hope, something more direct and explicit than types and inferences. We have a Divine '*promise.*' And had he been asked, Where? he might no doubt have repeated what he once declared in his preaching, that 'by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began hath God spoken of' these coming 'times of the restitution of all things.'‡ But it is generally agreed that, in speaking of this restitution under the name of 'new heavens and a new earth,' he has an immediate reference to Isaiah 65 : 17 (comp. 66 : 22; Rev. 21 : 1): 'For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.'

If, therefore, you would have a glimpse of that future world as it was shown to Isaiah, you have but to examine the de-

* *δέ.* † Sin. *καινὴν γῆν,* instead of *γῆν καινήν.*

‡ Acts 3 : 21.—Indeed, the reading of Sin. A, and the Vulgate, which Lachmann follows, is *τὰ ἐπαγγέλματα, promises.*

scription given of it by God Himself in the very passage that Peter had in his eye, when he wrote the words before us; and be not hastily offended, if you find there things that surprise you: 'For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create; for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die a hundred years old; but the sinner being a hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them. And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord.' *

You at once perceive that, while there are great changes here foretold in the present condition of things, the features of resemblance also are numerous and striking; just as the ark of Noah carried over into the world that followed the flood very much that belonged to the world that preceded it, and even the returning dove bore 'in her mouth an olive leaf plucked off,' † and wet with the waters of judgment. In like manner, taking Isaiah and Peter together, I see not how the conclusion can be evaded, that in that world for which we are still looking, after the coming of the day of God, after the conflagration, and after the Church of the resurrection and the translation—the Church of the first-born—the first-fruits unto

* Is. 65 : 17–25. † Gen. 8 : 11.

God and the Lamb—has been received into the undefiled and unchanging glory of the new heavens, there will be continued on the new earth successive generations of men in the flesh, under conditions of most blessed amelioration both physical and moral, and absolutely secured throughout the long millennial age against the wiles and assaults of Satan,* but not yet made perfect, nor free from all attaint of sin and death.

This much is so plainly revealed, that we are not to be deterred from believing it by the difficulty, were it ever so great, of explaining in what way the race shall be enabled to survive the conflagration. But that difficulty really loses its force, as soon as you make proper allowance for possible exaggeration in our conceptions of the extent and effects of the fiery trial,† which many indeed suppose will reach no further, in the first instance at least, than to what is called the prophetic earth, or the territory of Christendom, and the four great Empires of Daniel's visions. Then remember what has already been said of the duration and stages of this judgment—of the several hours of this great day of the Lord—and it is nothing at all to be wondered at, if its rising be attended by mists of the morning, which shall disappear in the splendor of its meridian. But if any shall still judge that these two considerations do not fully meet all the necessities of the case, we can then fall back on the principle, so largely illustrated by our Apostle in the second chapter, that 'the Lord' who saved Noah with his household from the ruins of the old world, and Lot from the flames of Sodom, and, we may add, the three young faithful Hebrews from Nebuchadnezzar's burning fiery furnace, though heated one seven times more than it was wont to be heated, 'knoweth how' to make good, and to reconcile, all His words, both of warning and of promise.

IV. A few words in conclusion on the *practical inference* drawn from the solemn prospect thus opened up to the faith of the Church: 'Seeing *then* that *all these things shall be dis-*

* Rev. 20 : 1–3.

† The reader will do well to compare such passages as Is. 13 : 9–13 and 24 : 6, 19–23, where language equally strong is seen to be reconcilable with the continuance of the earth, and of men upon it.

solved'—it is even more emphatic in the original: *Since, then, all these things are dissolving*;* their doom being even now written on them, and working in them—'*what manner* of persons *ought ye to be in* all *holy conversation and godliness*,' literally, *in holy behaviors and pieties*; † '*looking for and hasting unto the coming*'—or rather, as in the margin, *hasting the coming*‡—'*of the day of God*.'

That 'the fashion of this world passeth away'—that, like the body of man, this world in all its present arrangements and interests, is 'dead because of sin,' and must pass through dissolution into regeneration and a higher form of existence—is reason enough in the apostolic estimation why we should not be conformed to its evil ways, nor seek to make it our portion and our rest. Having here 'no continuing city,' let us cherish and manifest the spirit of 'strangers and pilgrims,' and in our relations both to men and to God be governed by the law of our heavenly citizenship. Observe that the habitual expectation of 'the coming of the day of God' is urged by Peter upon his brethren as being at once a characteristic mark of the true Christian, and itself a most powerful motive to universal holiness. And so it is everywhere represented throughout the New Testament; as where Paul takes it for granted that, if we are to be proficients in the school of the Divine grace, 'living soberly, and righteously, and godly, in this present world,' we shall be found 'looking for the blessed hope, and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ.' Peter's language even goes beyond that. He is not satisfied that we maintain, in regard to that day, the attitude merely of a passive expectancy. Our whole Christian life should be a distinct, direct effort to 'prepare the way of the Lord,' and so to *hasten* His coming. This glorious

* *τούτων οὖν πάντων λυομένων*. For *οὖν*, Tischendorf and Alford read *οὕτως*; (B, C—the latter, *δὲ οὕτως*.)

† Alford's rendering of *ἐν ἁγίαις ἀναστροφαῖς καὶ εὐσεβείαις*. Comp. ch. 2 : 2; 1 Pet. 1 : 15; 2 : 1. Huther and Alford connect these words with the next verse. But the common arrangement is to be preferred.—Sin.[1] has *ἡμᾶς*, instead of *ὑμᾶς*, after *δεῖ ὑπάρχειν*.

‡ *σπεύδοντας τὴν παρουσίαν*. The marginal rendering is generally preferred by the best interpreters from Erasmus to Wordsworth.—Sin.[1] omitted the words, *καὶ σπεύδ*.

consummation we can, and ever ought to, actively promote, by hastening the work of our own preparation, by the energy of prayer, and by the strenuous use of the appointed means for the speedy accomplishment of the number of God's elect.*

* 1 Cor. 7 : 31, (1 John 2 : 17;) Rom. 8 : 10; Heb. 13 : 14; 1 Pet. 2 : 11; Phil. 3 : 20; Tit. 2 : 12, 13; Matt. 3 : 3; Rev. 19 : 7; Luke 18 : 7, 8; 2 Pet. 3 : 9; Matt. 24 : 14; Rev. 14 : 6, 7.

Lecture XVI.

2 *Peter* 3 : 14–18.

'Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless. And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.'

In the 11th verse the impending dissolution of the world that now is had been urged as a motive to a pure and godly life. Here in the 14th verse it is rather the prospect of the new world that shall follow, that is employed for the same purpose: '*Wherefore, beloved*'—dear fellow-heirs of the coming glory—'*looking for these things*'*—this is explanatory of the *wherefore*—'*be diligent*,' even as I am on your behalf, (ch. 1 : 12, 15,) '*that, spotless and blameless*'—unlike those 'spots and blemishes' which now mar the beauty of your Christian fellowship, but, on the contrary, conformed to our Lord Himself, the 'faultless and spotless' Lamb of God—'*ye may be found of Him in peace*'†—breathing the atmosphere of peace, the peace which He left with us at His departure, and which ever dwells with holiness. The new heavens and the new earth,

* ταῦτα προσδοκῶντες. Comp. v. 17.

† ἄσπιλοι καὶ ἀμώμητοι (comp. ch. 2 : 13 and 1 Pet. 1 : 19) αὐτῷ εὑρεθῆναι (comp. 2 Cor. 12 : 20; 1 Pet. 1 : 7; 2 : 22) ἐν εἰρήνῃ.

which you are expecting, are to be the abode of righteousness. Let, then, the preparatory renovation, begun even now in yourselves, be perfected unto the day of Christ. Before the foundation of the world ye were chosen of God for this very end. For this end Christ gave Himself for the Church, 'that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.' For this end are appointed all ministries and ordinances; and, as it is the one grand aim of our continual labors and prayers, let it be no less so of your own. '*Found of Him*,' and adjudged by Him, at His appearing, thus '*spotless and blameless*,' you will be '*found of Him in peace*'—the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keeping your hearts and minds; and to that peace His coming will bring no alarm, but will set the seal of eternity.*

'*And*' meanwhile, the Apostle goes on to say, it will help to stimulate you in this work of preparation, if you bear in mind what I have already said of the reason why that coming is seemingly delayed. It is not forgetfulness of His promise, or any change of purpose. It is not indifference either to the jeering profanity of His enemies, or to the sorrows and prayers of them that love Him. No; call it rather His long-suffering; and '*the long-suffering of our Lord*'—here, I think, our Lord Jesus Christ, whose person as the Judge of all had been suggested by the words immediately preceding—'*account salvation*.'† For so it is in the intention of the Divine mercy; mercy, not only to perishing sinners, that space may be allowed them for repentance, and that they may thus escape the coming wrath, but mercy also to you 'who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before' you, that you too may have time to bring forth 'fruit unto holiness,' and so 'make your calling and election sure.'‡

And then comes that interesting appeal for confirmation of these apostolic counsels to the recorded testimony of the

* Rom. 8 : 29; Eph. 1 : 4; 5 : 27; Col. 1 : 22; 4 : 11–13; 1 Thess. 3 : 12, 13; 2 Thess. 5 : 23; Phil. 4 : 7.

† καὶ τὴν τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν μακροθυμίαν, σωτηρίαν ἡγεῖσθε.

‡ Heb. 6 : 18; Rom. 6 : 22; 2 Pet. 1 : 10.

great Apostle of the Gentiles. Throughout these Epistles, as we have had repeated occasion to remark, and particularly at the close also of the First Epistle,* the writer appears even solicitous to show that the spirit of personal partisanship, which so early manifested itself in the churches, had not in the least degree affected his own personal relations to Paul, or to the Gospel as preached by Paul. But of all these references the most striking is the one now before us: '*Even as also*† *our beloved brother Paul*'—brother in the apostleship as well as in the faith of Christ, and a brother none the less beloved because of the faithful rebuke I myself once received from him—'*according to the wisdom*'—the preëminent measure of wisdom—'*given unto him*' ‡—for, indeed, none of us has aught of his own to boast of 'in things pertaining to God,'§ and no one is more ready than he to acknowledge that all the service he is able to render in the establishment of the Church is 'according to the grace of God which is given unto him, as a wise master-builder' ‖—'*wrote*** *unto you.*'

Opinions differ as to which of Paul's Epistles is meant, being influenced chiefly by the view taken of the parties to whom Peter wrote, and of the subject of reference. Some,†† under the erroneous idea that those to whom our Epistle was addressed, were principally Jews, think of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and of those passages in it which speak of the Lord's coming and of the day approaching. Others, on the ground that every Epistle, to whomsoever addressed, was really intended for all Christians, name the Epistle to the Romans, which in two places especially treats of the Divine long-suffering,‡‡ or of the Epistles to the Thessalonians, in which the doctrine of the last things has peculiar prominence.§§ I should rather say that the general exhortation of the 14th verse, to which the first clause of the 15th is merely subsidi-

* See on 1 Pet. 1 : 12, 25 ; 5 : 12 ; 2 Pet. 1 : 12. † καθὼς καὶ.

‡ For αὐτῷ δοθεῖσαν, Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Alford read δοθ. αὐτῷ, (Sin. A, B, C.)

§ Heb. 5 : 1. ‖ 1 Cor. 3 : 19. ** ἔγραψεν.

†† Gerhard, Estius, Bengel, etc.—Heb. 9 : 27, 28 ; 10 : 25, 37.

‡‡ Œcumenius, Grotius, Dietlein, etc.—Rom. 2 : 4 ; 9 : 22, 23.

§§ De Wette, Alford.

ary, that the brethren should be ever striving after perfection, is that in support of which the appeal is made to the authority of Paul, and that the allusion is to some one Epistle sent by him to the believers of Asia Minor—perhaps the Epistle to the Ephesians,* which is supposed to have been intended for the churches generally of that region, or there is no reason why we might not take along with that the Epistles to the Galatians and the Colossians.† Certainly all three contain abundant evidence of the writer's zeal for the sanctification of Christ's professed followers.

This is, however, not a characteristic of those three Epistles only; and therefore it is added, '*as also in all the Epistles*'—or, as some, *in all Epistles* ‡—'*speaking in them of these things*.' What things? Here again the reference may be restricted to the 14th and 15th verses;§ or extended to what is said in this third chapter in regard to the close of this dispensation;‖ or it may embrace all the topics of apostolic exposition and exhortation throughout the Epistle, or both the Epistles.** And this view I prefer as better accounting for the mention of *all* Paul's Epistles, as well as for what follows: '*in which*'—or rather, *among which* things as treated by Paul; though some read, *in which* Epistles—'*are some things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and unstable wrest, as also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction*.'†† Here are several points that well deserve to be noticed.

1. In the first place, there were at that time certain scriptures or writings well known to Peter and his brethren, of which all parties familiarly spoke as *the Scriptures*, and to which they referred as the authoritative standards of religious teaching.

* Wiesinger.

† There is little probability in Fronmüller's suggestion of Ephesians, Colossians, and *Hebrews*.

‡ *ταῖς ἐπιστολαῖς*. The article is dropped by Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Alford, after A, B, C.

§ Bloomfield, Wiesinger, etc. ‖ Burkitt, Bengel, De Wette, etc.

** Dietl., Besser, Barnes, etc.

†† *ἐν οἷς* (Lachmann and Wordsworth: *αἷς*, for which Wiesinger also contends; —Sin. A, B, Syriac) *ἐστι δυσνόητά* (only here) *τινα, ἃ οἱ ἀμαθεῖς* (only here) *καὶ ἀστήρικτοι στρεβλοῦσιν*, (only here,) *ὡς καὶ τὰς λοιπὰς γραφάς*.

2. Secondly, Paul's Epistles were already recognized as belonging to those Scriptures.

3. Thirdly, these Epistles contain things which even the prince of the Apostles regarded as '*hard to be understood;*' not, however, on account of any peculiarity or defect in Paul's treatment of them, but solely on account of the difficulty of the topics themselves.

4. Fourthly, difficult as these matters were, Peter does not speak of them as unintelligible, or unprofitable, or unimportant, or as what had better be kept out of the way of common people. In this respect the wisdom given both to Paul and Peter differed from that of very many worthy persons who do *not* belong to the Church of Rome, but who would a great deal rather not be asked, after all the hard thinking they have to do on week-days, to do any more of it on Sunday.

5. And yet it is only too true, in the fifth place, that the high themes sometimes handled by Paul, and not they alone, but '*also the other Scriptures*' generally, whether of the New Testament or the Old, can be made a bad use of; as when Paul's doctrines of a sinner's justification by faith without works, and of the believer's freedom from the law, were perverted to apologies for a sinful life; or his assertion of the Divine sovereignty in human salvation was made to paralyze the sense of human responsibility; or his glowing anticipations of the Advent were turned to countenance such delusions as that the day of the Lord had come, or that the resurrection was past already.* Thus there is no Scripture that may not be, we might almost say, that has not been, '*wrested*'—*put to the rack*, as the word means—tortured from its true and salutary sense to a clean contrary and fatal one. This has ever been the work of men '*unlearned*,' uninstructed, not in human learning, of which they who had most have often been the worst errorists, but in the things of God, in the truth as it is in Jesus, in the mind of the Spirit—of men consequently '*unstable*,' having no root in the faith and love of God's children, not builded on the Living Stone, drifting without anchor

* Rom. 3 : 8; 6 : 1, 15; 9 : 19; 2 Thess. 2 : 2, (see *Lectures*, etc.;) Tim. 22 : 18.

on the cross currents of speculation. And this evil work they prosecute, possibly to the misleading of some, and the troubling of the Church, but certainly '*unto their own destruction.*'

In the next two verses we have a final summing up of the lessons to be drawn from the whole Epistle.

'*Do ye therefore, beloved, knowing* these things *before*' *—fully forewarned as you now are with regard to the rise and working of these 'evil men and seducers' †—'*beware lest, carried away* ‡ *with the error of the lawless*,' § hurried off your feet, as it were, by a rushing torrent, '*ye fall from your own steadfastness.*' ‖ They must not trust to their present sense of steadfastness, as of itself affording security for the future. They 'stood by faith.' They were 'kept by the power of God' itself only 'through faith;' ** and according to their faith would be their steadfastness. Against their faith, therefore, would be directed the utmost arts and efforts of their enemies; and what was needed on their part was an habitual sense of their own weakness and danger, and the spirit of a perpetual vigilance. As had been explained to them in the course of the Epistle, they must expect to encounter the manifold subtleties of error, the allurements of the flesh, the pretensions and promises of arrogant apostasy, the reasonings of a spurious philosophy, the shafts of a profane wit—all commanded and enforced by the example of yielding numbers. How, then, could they hope to 'withstand in the evil day,' except by planting their feet on the Rock, and 'taking to them the whole armor of God,' that so, 'having done all,' they might 'stand'? ††

The last verse, then, specifies one essential condition of such stability in spiritual things, and that is growth—a truth which the writer had sought again and again to impress on

* *προγινώσκοντες*. Comp. v. 14.

† 2 Tim. 3 : 13.

‡ *συναπαχθέντες*—as in Gal. 2 : 13. The *also* of our English version may have been intended as compensation for *συν*, (Tyndale, Geneva: 'lest ye be also plucked away . . . and fall,' etc.) But the arrangement gives an undue emphasis to the subject of *ἐκπέσητε*.

§ *ἀθέσμων*—as in ch. 2 : 7.

‖ *στηριγμοῦ*—only here.

** Rom. 11 ; 20 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 5.

†† Eph. 6 : 13.

his brethren.* If they would even maintain their present footing, they must look upward. If 'that which they had, they would hold fast till Christ came,' they must not think to keep it stowed away in a napkin, 'idle and unfruitful,' yet safe. They must trade with it in order to its continual increase. 'Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, they must press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.' †

And you will observe also how naturally the leading thought of the Epistle reappears at its close. At the very outset the believers had been reminded that it was 'through the knowledge' of God that 'the Divine power had given unto them all things that pertain unto life and godliness;' and still the Apostle's prayer for them was, that 'grace and peace might be multiplied unto them in the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.' Here, as the conclusion of the whole matter, and as the only effectual preservation from the assaults and seductions of all forms of a science falsely so called, this same blessing of spiritual enlargement, and that through the same means, is laid on their own consciences and hearts as a most solemn obligation, '*But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ;*' ‡ in the gracious tempers and endowments of which our Lord and Saviour is both the Author and the Finisher; and, in order to that, grow in the knowledge of which He Himself is the glorious and infinite object. By thus 'following on to know the Lord,' you will at once secure your present safety, and best promote the work of your perfecting, and preparation for 'His appearing and His kingdom.' § In these fewest possible words, and those suggested by the general scope of the Epistle, Peter really comprehends all that is included in the various clauses of the corresponding

* 1 Pet. 2 : 2; 2 Pet. 1 : 5, 8. Calvin: 'quia hæc unica est perseverandi ratio, si assidue progredimur, nec resides subsistimus in medio itinere.'

† Rev. 2 : 25; Phil. 3 : 13, 14.

‡ ἐν χάριτι καὶ γνώσει τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν.—Κυρίου is generally taken as governing both nouns. (So likewise Fronmüller in the version, though in his note he objects.)

§ Hos. 6 : 3; 2 Tim. 4 : 1.

exhortation in Jude (20, 21): 'But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.'

Both Epistles also end with a doxology, that of Peter being addressed unmistakably to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and who can doubt that the writer thought of that Saviour as a Divine person? '*To Him the glory*' *—the glory, as of your present privileges and hopes, so of your progressive sanctification, and ultimate complete redemption from sin and sorrow and death. The whole glory of this from first to last belongs to Him, and to Him let it be ascribed in the rapturous songs of the Church, '*both now and for ever*,' or, according to the peculiarity of the original phrase, '*both now and unto the day of eternity*.' † It is a hymn of adoration and thanksgiving. It begins even '*now*,' in the very shadow of the Cross, and from the dungeons and stakes of the first martyrs it comes sounding down through all the ages in one continuous strain; nor shall it cease till caught up and lost in the multitudinous anthem that shall celebrate the birth of the new creation, and the coronation of its King: 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four living creatures'—the cherubic representatives of the redeemed from among men—'said, Amen.' ‡

* *αὐτῷ ἡ δόξα.* † *εἰς ἡμέραν αἰῶνος.* ‡ Rev. 5 : 12–14; 14 : 4.

THE

SECOND EPISTLE OF PETER

TRANSLATED.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PETER.

I. SIMEON PETER, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained like precious faith with us in the righteousness of our God and Saviour* Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied 2
in the true knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.

Forasmuch as His divine power hath given unto us all 3
things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by glory and might:
whereby He hath given unto us the exceeding great and 4
precious promises, that by these ye might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world through lust: but for this very 5
reason also do ye, contributing all diligence, furnish in your faith fortitude; and in fortitude, knowledge; and in know- 6
ledge, self-control; and in self-control, patience; and in patience, godliness; and in godliness, brotherly kindness; 7
and in brotherly kindness, love. For these things being 8
yours, and increasing, render *you* not idle nor unfruitful as to the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he 9
that should lack these things is blind, being near-sighted, having forgotten the cleansing away of his old sins.
Wherefore the rather, brethren, be diligent to make your 10
calling and election sure; for, doing these things, ye shall never fall: for so there shall be richly furnished unto you 11
the entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

* Or, *and the Saviour.*

12 Wherefore I will not be negligent * to remind you al-
ways of these things, though ye know *them*, and are estab-
13 lished in the present truth: but I think it right, so long
as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by way of remem-
14 brance; knowing that speedy is the laying aside of my
15 tabernacle, as also our Lord Jesus Christ showed me: but
I will endeavor that ye may even at all times be able,
after my departure, to call these things to mind.
16 For we had not followed cunningly devised fables, when
we made known unto you the power and coming of our
Lord Jesus Christ, but had been eye-witnesses of His
17 majesty. For He received from God the Father honor
and glory, a voice being borne to Him such as this from
the sublime glory: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am
18 well pleased; and this voice we, being with Him on the
19 holy mount, heard borne from heaven. And we have
more sure the prophetic word, whereunto ye do well that
ye take heed, as unto a lamp shining in a dark place, un-
20 til day dawn, and the day-star arise, in your hearts; know-
ing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture cometh of one's
21 own interpretation: for not by man's will was prophecy
brought at any time, but, borne along by the Holy Ghost,
spake holy men of God. †

II. But there were also false prophets among the people,
as also among you there shall be false teachers, who privily
shall bring in destructive sects, ‡ even denying the Mas-
ter who bought them, bringing upon themselves speedy
2 destruction. And many shall follow their lascivious ways,
by reason of whom the way of the truth shall be evil spo-
3 ken of; and in covetousness shall they with feigned words
make merchandise of you; for whom the judgment from
of old lingereth not, and their destruction slumbereth not.
4 For if God spared not angels when they sinned, but, cast-
ing *them* to hell, delivered *them* to chains of darkness, be-
5 ing reserved for judgment; and spared not the ancient

* Or as many read, *I will be sure.* † Some read, *spake men from God.*
‡ Gr. *sects of destruction.*

world, but kept Noah, a preacher of righteousness, with seven others,* when He brought the flood upon the world of the ungodly; and, reducing to ashes the cities of So- 6
dom and Gomorrah, condemned *them* to an overthrow, having made *them* an example of those that should afterwards be ungodly; and delivered righteous Lot, worn 7
down with the filthy behavior of the lawless: (for in see- 8
ing and hearing did the righteous man, dwelling among them, day after day torment his righteous soul with *their* unlawful deeds:) the Lord knoweth how to deliver the 9
godly out of temptation, but the unrighteous to reserve under punishment † unto the day of judgment; but chief- 10
ly those who walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise lordship. Daring men, self-willed, they tremble not while railing at glories; whereas angels, who 11
are greater in strength and power, bring not against them before the Lord a railing judgment. But these, as irra- 12
tional beasts born naturally for ‡ capture and destruction, railing in things that they understand not, shall even perish § in their own corruption, and so receive the wages of 13
unrighteousness. Accounting *it* pleasure *to* revel in the daytime; spots and blemishes; revelling in their own deceits, while feasting with you; having eyes full of an adul- 14
teress, and ceasing not from sin; alluring unstable souls; having a heart exercised in covetousness; children of a curse; forsaking the right way, they went astray, having 15
followed the way of Balaam the *son* of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness, but had a reproof of his 16
own transgression; a dumb ass, having spoken with man's voice, restrained the madness of the prophet. These are 17
wells without water, and mists ‖ driven by a tempest; for whom the blackness of darkness for ever ** hath been reserved. For, speaking great swelling *words* of vanity, 18
they allure through †† the lusts of the flesh, by lascivious

* Gr. *Noah the eighth.*
† Gr. *being punished.*
‡ Or, as many read, *natural irrational beasts born for.*
§ Or, as many, *utterly perish.*
‖ For *and mists*, some read, *clouds.*
** Some omit the words, *for ever.*
†† Or, as the Greek, *in.*

ways,* those who were just escaping † from those who
19 live in error; promising them liberty, while they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by what any one hath
20 been overcome, by that hath he also been enslaved. For if, having escaped from the pollutions of the world through ‡ the true knowledge of the Lord § and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are yet entangled again therein, and overcome, the
21 last state is become worse with them than the first. For it were better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, having known *it*, to turn back from
22 the holy commandment delivered unto them. But there hath happened unto them that of the true proverb: The dog turned back to his own vomit; and: The sow that was washed, into the wallowing-place of mire.

III. This now second Epistle, beloved, write I unto you, in *both* which I stir up your pure mind by way of remem-
2 brance, that ye may be mindful of the words spoken before by the holy prophets, and of your Apostles' com-
3 mandment ‖ of the Lord and Saviour: knowing this first, that there shall come at the end of the days mockers in
4 mockery,** walking according to their own lusts, and saying: Where is the promise of his coming? for, since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue thus from the be-
5 ginning of the creation. For of this they are willingly ignorant, that, by the word of God, heavens were from of old, and earth out of water and by water consisting;
6 whereby the world that then was, being flooded with
7 water, perished: but the heavens which are now, and the earth, have by the same word †† been laid up in store, being reserved for fire unto the day of judgment and de-
8 struction of the ungodly men. But of this one thing be ye, beloved, not ignorant, that one day *is* with the Lord as
9 a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The

* Some copies read, *by lasciviousness.*
† Some copies read, *who were really escaped.*
‡ Gr. *in.* § Some copies read, *our Lord.*
‖ Some copies read, *the comm. of us the Apostles*, or, *our Apostles' comm.*
** Some copies omit the words, *in mockery.* †† Some read, *by His word.*

Lord is not tardy concerning the promise,* as some account tardiness; but is long-suffering toward us, † not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief; ‡ in which 10
the heavens shall pass away with a rushing noise, but the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works therein shall be burned up. Since, 11
then, all these things are dissolving, § what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy behavior and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, 12
in consequence of which the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements melt with fervent heat. But, according to His promise, ‖ we look for new heavens 13
and a new earth, wherein righteousness dwelleth.

Wherefore, beloved, looking for these things, be dili- 14
gent that spotless and blameless ye may be found of Him in peace; and the long-suffering of our Lord account sal- 15
vation: even as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given unto him, wrote unto you, as also in 16
all the Epistles,** speaking in them of these things; among which †† are some things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and unstable wrest, as also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction. Do ye, therefore, beloved, 17
knowing *these things* before, beware lest, carried away with the error of the lawless, ye fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our 18
Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him the glory, both now and unto the day of eternity. Amen.

* Or, *The Lord of the promise is not tardy.*
† Some read, *toward you;* others, *for your sakes.*
‡ Some copies add the words, *in the night.*
§ Some read, *Since all these things are thus dissolving.*
‖ Some read, *promises.*
** Some read, *all Epistles.*
†† Some read, *in which,* (Epistles.)

INDEX.

ADULTERY, adulteress, 467, 468, 469.
All, submit to one another, 316, 317, 318, 319.
Angels, imitators of the prophets in their interest regarding the prophecies, 56–59; who sinned, 449, 450.
Answer, lit. asking, inquiry of a good conscience, etc., 254.
Apostle, an authoritative expounder of Christ's law, 14.
Ark, was a preparing, 248.

BABYLON, 333
Balaam, 469, 470.
Baptism, 252, 253, 254.
Barren, idle and unfruitful, 380, 381.
Blessed=adored and praised εὐλ. applied only to God, 25.
Blindness, near-sightedness, 382, 383.
Brotherhood, to be loved, 154, 155.
Brotherly kindness in godliness, and in brotherly kindness love, 375, 376.
Brother-lovers, Philadelphians, 208.
Brute beasts, irrational beasts, 465, 466.
Busybody in other men's matters=intermeddler, classed with a murderer and a thief, 293

CHAINS of darkness, 451.
Charity, love intense, 278, 279, 280.
Christ suffered once, 231; for (concerning) sins, 232; the just for (in the room of) the unjust, 233; to bring us to God, 233, 234; his sufferings shared by us, 288, 289; being reproached for the name of, blessedness of, 290, 291, 292; whom having not seen ye love; love of, to us and ours to Him make up a great joy—"my Beloved is mine, and I am His," 38, 39; knowledge of, the means of life, 364, 365; resurrection, makes baptism efficacious, 256; power and coming of, not the destruction of Jerusalem, 400, 401, 402, 403; the Lamb faultless and spotless, 77–79; true knowledge of, 381, 382; resurrection of, the means of regeneration, 26, 27; the Living Stone, 104; Chief Corner Stone, 105; at the right hand of God, 258, 259.
Christians, a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a people who are a possession of God, called out of darkness into marvellous light, 121–123.
Christian, suffering as a, 293, 294.
Christ-like, not rendering evil for evil, etc., 210, 211.
Church that is at Babylon, she that is coëlect in Babylon, 332.
Commandments of Apostles, 485, 486.
Conscience toward God, commands patient submission on the part of slaves, 166, 167; good, toward God, 255, 256.
Constraint no motive for a pastor, 305
Conversation honest=good behavior, 130–133.
Courteous men, lit. kindly-minded, 209, 210.
Covetousness, making merchandise, 443, 444.
Crown of glory unfading, 309, 310.

DAY OF JUDGMENT, 497, 498; day, one, is with the Lord, etc., 499; of visitation, 134, 135.
Decease, departure, Peter's, 395.
Devil, adversary, roaring lion, 322, 323, 324; steadfastness in the faith the only means of resisting the, 325.
Dignities, glories, 462, 463.

Divine nature, how we become partakers of, 367, 368.
Dog and his vomit, etc., 479, 480.

Earth standing out of the water, etc., earth out of water, and by water consisting, 494, 495, 496.
Elect, chosen ones, foreknown by God, 18, 19; sanctified by the Spirit for obedience, etc., 20.
Election, how made sure, 384, 385, 386.
End of all things, not the end of life, etc., Calvin quoted, 274, 275, 276.
End of disbelievers, what shall it be? 296, 297.
Ensamples, patterns to the flock, 308.
Entrance into the kingdom richly furnished, 387, 388.
Error of the wicked, lit. lawless, 521.
Eye-witnesses of His majesty, 404, 405.

Fables, cunningly devised, 403, 404.
Faith, bestowed by God, precious, 352, 353; through, in the righteousness, etc., 354, 355.
Fear, 70, 72.
Figure, Baptism, 251, 252.
Filthy lucre, base gain, 306.
Flesh, being put to death in, 240, 241, 242.
Followers, imitators of that which is good, 220, 221.

Gift, a gift, 282, 283.
Glory and virtue, by glory and might, 364.
Glory, the glory to Him for ever, 523; glory, credit, no honor to be quiet when in fault, etc., 167, 168.
God of all grace perfects, establishes, strengthens, settles His children after they have suffered "a little while," 327, 328, 329; the Father, He (Christ) received honor and glory from, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409; the sole author of regeneration, 26; the will of, our principle, 263; not the will of the Gentiles; lasciviousness, etc., 264, 265; to be feared, 155.
Godliness in patience, 375.
Gospel, preached to the dead, etc., 268, 269, 270.
Government, lordship, 461.
Grace, grow in the, 522.
Greatly rejoice, (greatly exult,) great joy compatible with great trials, 36, 37.
Growth, to be continually sought, 91, 92.

Heir of a blessing, 211, 212.
Heresies, damnable, lit. and prop. destructive sects, 439, 440.
Heritage, heritages, allotted portions, 308.
Holiness, God demands holiness in His children, 68, 69.
Holy G. spake, 428, 429.
Hope, lively, (living,) the effect of regeneration, 28, 29; to the end, (hope perfectly,) 64, 65.
Hospitality without murmuring, 281, 282.
House of God, the judgment beginning from the, 294, 295.
Humility under God's hand, 320, 321.
Husbands, 195–198.

Inheritance, the invariable accompaniment of hope, 29; reserved, (kept,) like the best wine at Cana, 31, note.
Interpretation, private, lit. of one's own, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428.

Judgment, reserved for, 451.

King, to be honored, 156–159.
Kiss, peace to all, etc., 334.
Knowledge of the trials of brethren, an encouragement to patience, 325, 326, 327.

Liberty, not to be used as a cloak, (covering,) etc., 147–150
Light, lamp shining in a dark place, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422.
Loins of the mind, to be girded up, 63.
Long-suffering of our Lord, account salvation, 517.
Lords, lording, forbidden to pastors, 367.
Lord, Master, denying the, who bought them, bringing upon themselves speedy destruction, 440, 441, 445, 446; not willing that any should perish, 500, 501.
Lot, vexed, worn down, 454, 455.

Love of brethren, the result of soul-purification in obeying the truth through the Spirit, 81–83.
Lover of life, 212–217.
Lusts, fleshly, 126–128; war against the soul, 129, 130.

MAN, hidden in the heart=to Paul's inner man, 190.
Mark, 'my son,' 333.
Men, to be honored, 151–153.
Milk, of the word, sincere, lit. rational, guileless milk, the only means of growth, 93, 94.
Mind, thought, intent, the thought of Christ suffering, the motive to holiness, the armor of the soul, 260, 261, 262.

NEW HEAVENS, etc., 511, 512, 513.
Noah, a preacher of righteousness, 452.
Noise, great, a rushing noise, etc., 508, 509.

OBEDIENCE, required of God's children, 66, 67.
Old sins, forgetting the cleansing of, 383.
Oracles of God, the rule of discourse, 284.
Ordinance of man, human institution, to be submitted to, 136–139; for the Lord's (Christ's) sake, 140.
Overseers, taking the oversight, overseeing; the office of presbyter and overseer or bishop identical in the apostolic age, 304.

PAUL, our beloved brother, 518, 519, 520.
Patience, in self-control, 374, 375.
Peter, a servant, bondman of Jesus Christ, no pope, 350, 351; a partaker of the glory, etc., 303; a co-presbyter, 300, 301; a witness of the sufferings of Christ, 301, 302.
Pitiful men, tender-hearted, 209.
Plaiting of hair, etc., 188, 189.
Power of God gives life and godliness, 362, 363.
Preciousness of Christ, the Living Stone belongs to believers only, 114, 115; to unbelievers He is a stumbling-stone, 116–118.
Priesthood, holy, Christians, 112, 113.
Promises, great and precious, given, 360, 361.
Prophets, eager students of their own predictions concerning Christ, 48–51.
Punishment of evil-doers, etc, the end of government, 141–143.

RAILING accusation, judgment, 464.
Ready confession, be ready always for an answer, 224, 225, 226, 227.
Regeneration, by the word of God, 84–86.
Rejected by men, (Stone,) 106; with God elect, 106, 107.
Respect of persons, none with God, 73–75.
Revelation of Christ (from heaven) the grand incentive to every Christian duty, 60–62.
Righteous, scarcely saved, 297, 298.

SACRAMENTS, Calvin's account of, 257.
Saints, kept (guarded) guarded in the power of God as in the element of their life; wondered at and railed at, 266, 267.
Sarah, 191–194.
Scoffers, mockers in mockery, 487, 488, 489.
Servants, domestics, slaves to be subject, etc., 160–165.
Silvanus, Silas, the faithful brother, 331.
Sobriety, 64; prudence, soundness of mind, 276, 277.
Sodom, etc., 453.
Spirit, meek and quiet, 190, 191; quickened in, 242, 243.
Spirits, disobedient in the days of Noah, 240, 243.
Stone, precious, (Christ,) 108.
Stones, living, Christians, 109, 110.
Strangers, sojourners, pilgrims, Christians, 16, 17.
Stripes, lit. weals, the marks of the stripes, slaves (suffering for Christ) could well bear cruel blows when thinking of the scourging of Jesus, 180–184.
Sufferers for righteousness' sake, 222, 223.
Sympathy, having compassion, 207, 208.
Swelling (words) of vanity, 475, 476, 477, 478.

TABERNACLE, while in it, Peter's work, 392, 393; laying aside of, speedy, 393, 394.
Teachers, false, 436, 437, 438.
Temperance, self-control in knowledge, 373, 374.
Temptations, trials that may lead to sin, grievous to the saints, 42, 43.

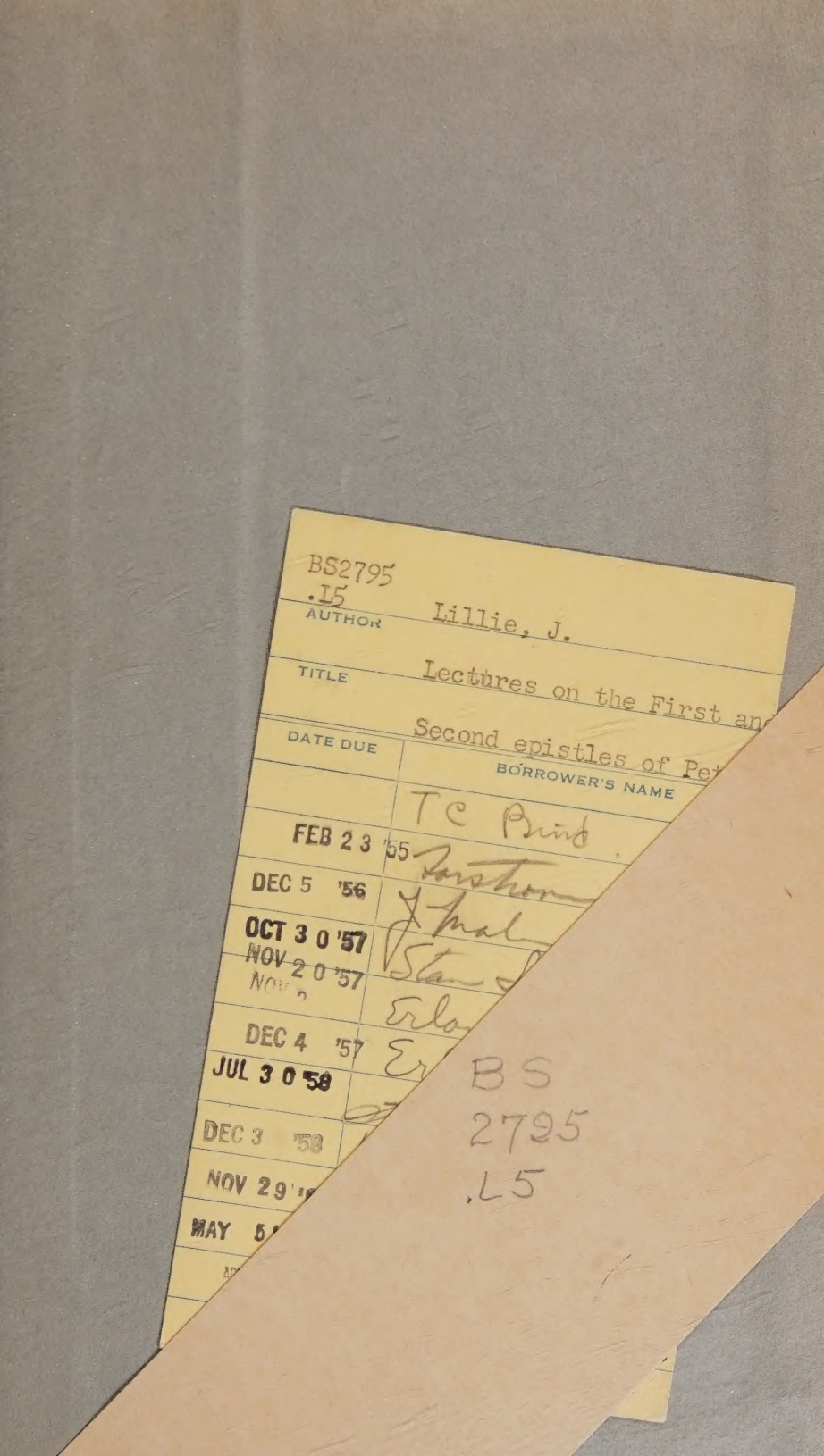
Thief in the night, 505, 506.
Things, looking for these, etc., 516, 517.
Trial, (proving,) the proving of faith more precious than that of gold that perisheth, 44, 45, 46; lit. burning not to be thought strange, 286, 287, 288.
Truth, way of, evil spoken of, 443.

UNANIMITY, be all of one mind, 205–207.

VIRTUE, fortitude, 372; knowledge in, 373.

WATER, which in a like figure now saveth, as also even baptism, 251.
Watching, sobriety, for prayer, 277.
Way of righteousness, 478, 479.
Ways, pernicious, destructive, 442.
Wells, without water, 473, 474, 475.
Well-doing, God's way of silencing the foolish, 145–147.
Wives, be subject, etc., 185–187.
Word, a more sure, of prophecy, more sure the prophetic word, 413, 414, 415, 416
Works, therein shall be burned up, 509, 510, 511.

YOUNGER, submit to the elder, 312, 313, 314, 315.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